

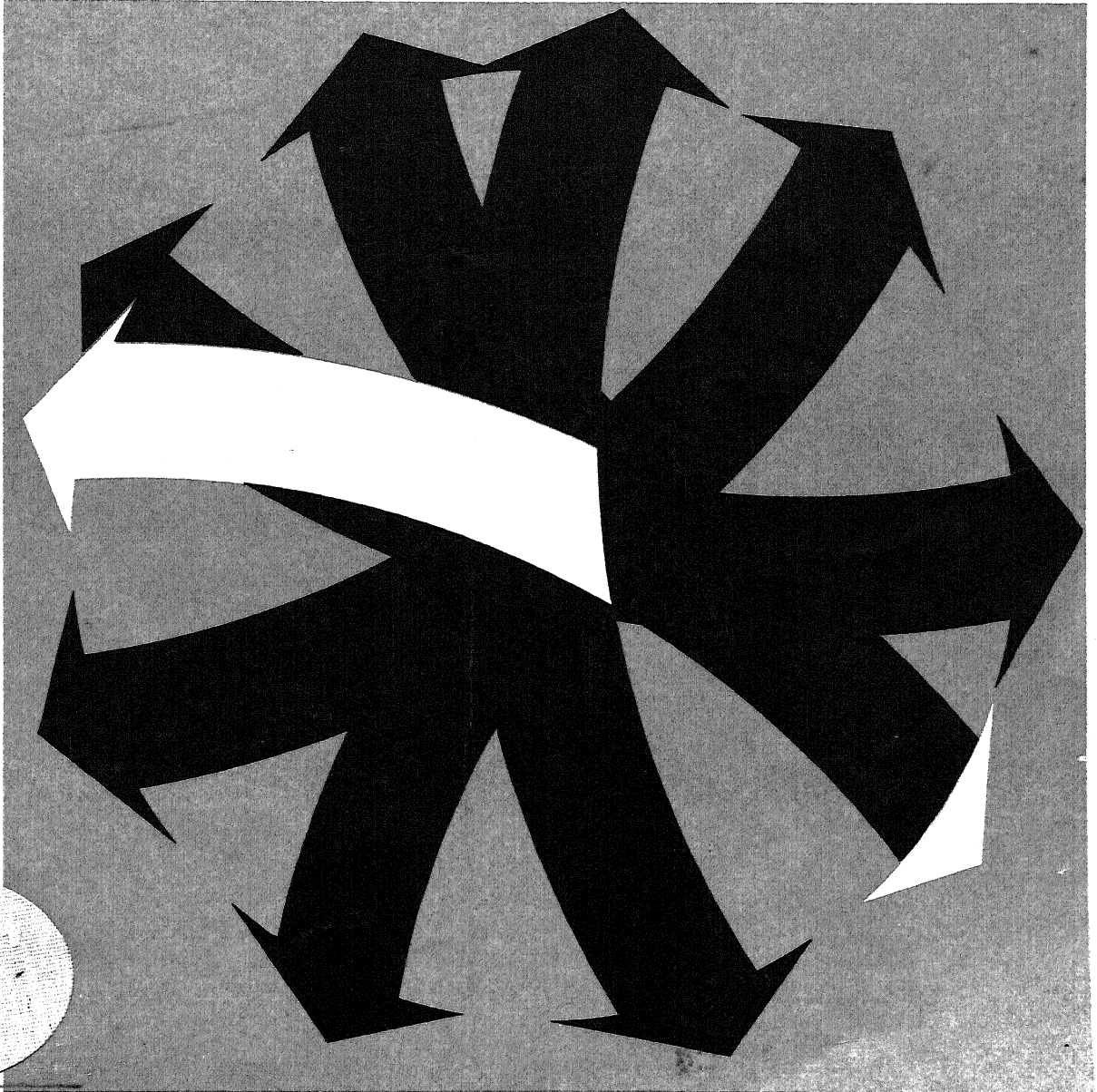
Special Issue

# Mass Media Codes of Ethics and Councils

A comparative international  
study on professional  
standards

Reports and Papers on Mass Communication

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# **Mass Media Codes of Ethics and Councils**

**A comparative international  
study on professional  
standards**

**by J. Clement Jones**

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## Preface

In recent years mass media organizations have been making increasing efforts to formulate professional standards which their members might wish to apply in their work of transmitting, disseminating and commenting on news and information and generally in presenting contemporary events to their various audiences. This trend was already in evidence almost twenty years ago when a Unesco publication, *Professional Association in the Mass Media*, pointed to the fact that organizations of media professionals were to be found in around one hundred countries of the world and that one of their main concerns was to establish generally acceptable codes of conduct. Since then, with the phenomenal technical growth of the media, the range and rapidity of their coverage and the depth of their impact, this concern has come even more to the forefront.

It was against this background that Unesco's General Conference, in a resolution adopted at its eighteenth session in 1974, called for the preparation of a study on national codes of ethics in the media of mass communication which would be «designed to promote the sense of responsibility which should accompany the full exercise of freedom of information». The object of the study was to provide source material for all those working in the media who might be interested either in devising codes of ethics or in revising those already in existence.

In addition to making available the data thus assembled, the present study offers a comparative analysis of the various provisions and seeks to delineate some common approaches to the content, formulation and administration of ethical codes. The author, Mr. Clement Jones, a former editorial director of the Wolverhampton Express and Star and now an Honorary Vice-President of the Guild of British Newspaper Editors, has had a long-standing interest in this subject. He was for a number of years a member of the United Kingdom Press Council and has occupied various advisory positions with national and international bodies concerned with both the press and broadcasting.

Unesco joins Mr. Clement Jones in thanking governments, media councils, professional groups and others who have contributed material for this study.

The author is responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this book, and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not engage the responsibility of the Organization.

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Unesco concerning the legal status of any country or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of any country or territory.

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# Introduction

In many countries of the world the media of mass communication are suffering from two crises, both of which have direct repercussions upon professional standards. One is an economic crisis, in which the costs of production now far outweigh earned income. The media cannot always be self-supporting. This means that questions of subsidy have to be carefully scrutinized if the standards of media performance are not to be unduly affected. The other is the crisis of credibility, which is currently almost a universal malaise within the mass communications industry. It is not enough to maintain a free flow of information ; that information must be gathered and disseminated with responsibility, objectivity and, above all, truthfully. Many people outside the profession however, do not believe that this is really the case any longer. They tend to mistrust the media even though they may have no other comparable sources of information. The two crises inter-react. The more serious the economic crisis becomes, the more it involves the question of credibility.

These pressures on the media, coming from all sides, have brought about fluctuations in standards. This in turn has stimulated counter-pressures calling for drastic reappraisals. So there is hardly a country where those engaged in mass communication have not felt themselves caught between the «cross-fire» of demands, on the one hand, to relax and, on the other, to reassert their standards. Often, despite a life-time's experience in media work, they are coming to feel insecure, rejected and forced into a defensive rôle. In many countries, this has taken the form of over-reaction towards threats to their security, some of which may have been more imaginary than real. The result is that voluntary professional codes of ethics are being turned to more and more.

Codes of ethics, of course, do not in themselves offer any panacea. They may perhaps appear as a life-line tracing the way back to responsibility and to credibility. But in the end it is the mass communicators themselves throughout the world who will have to work out their own solutions. The present compilation does not therefore profess to be any ready-made blueprint. What it does is to bring together some of the background infor-

mation and to advance some of the arguments needed to help media people and others concerned to make up their own minds in accordance with their own needs and circumstances. And that, after all, is an illustration in miniature of what the free flow of information is all about – keeping the sources of information, so vital to opinion-forming at any level, clear and relatively free from undesirable pressures.

The information presented in the following pages has been obtained from sources directly concerned with media operations, that is, from governments, media councils, journalists and broadcasters, many of whom replied to Unesco's enquiries and then to further correspondence with the writer. Their help is gratefully acknowledged. Not all those approached were equally responsive, which is to be regretted since this has doubtless led to some errors or omissions. Regrettably, also, some shades of meaning and emphasis will have been lost in the process of translation. Furthermore, the necessity to keep the material within manageable proportions has also called for considerable compression. For all of these reasons, this study should be regarded as a discussion document, a sort of introductory survey rather than a definitive treatment of the subject.

The study begins with a general discussion of the development of ethical codes before setting out, continent by continent and country by country, the source material obtained from existing codes. It examines the reasons for their formulation and, where possible, evaluates their effectiveness ; it also discusses various courses of action and different formulae adopted for the many countries where no media councils or formal codes are yet in existence. Beyond this, in view of the vast differences in the structure and operation of the media of mass communication from country to country, it seemed that no further analysis was possible. Finally, certain conclusions are drawn, pointing to differences, common factors and significant trends of help to those who may themselves be in the process of drawing up codes of conduct.

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Wolverhampton, U.K.

## PART ONE

# CODES OF ETHICS

### Section one — International Activities

Codes of Ethics as applied to the media of mass communication are of recent creation. They are so recent, in fact, that there are more countries in the world without accepted or formalized media disciplines, whether self-imposed or super-imposed, than there are countries that do have Codes of Ethics. But many of those countries which so far lack such disciplines are beginning to feel the need for them. In some instances these feelings come from external dissatisfaction over the irresponsibility and triviality of the media ; in others they come from the media themselves seeking self-protection through self-discipline. And there is a third variation when those in authority decide to exercise control over the media for their own ends. When formulated all media Codes, whatever their genesis, have a number of common factors which can easily be recognized.

The very speed of communication ; the vast and growing sophistication of methods of news collection and dissemination ; the increase in economic pressures in a highly cost-intensive industry needing to make profits, are but a few of the contributory factors which have led to changes in the media of mass communication. These in their turn have caused dissatisfaction with the conduct and performance of the media.

In the early days of printing «The Press» was primarily a means of individual expression, comment and criticism. It was not a big industry, nor an industry which was primarily concerned with profits, nor with the concentration of the power of communication with the many into the hands of the few. It served to make possible the spread of new and burgeoning ideas where thought had previously been narrow and confined. The «Freedom of the Press» fought for by our ancestors was an intellectual freedom, the battle for which has been subsequently carried on more in the academic world than in that of commercial journalism, which is chiefly concerned with the freedom to make money.

Mass communication journalism as we know it today is a relatively modern occupation, and modern too are the problems which have given rise to this study. Mass communication came into existence at the beginning of

the nineteenth century. Factors which made it possible include the mechanization of printing and type-setting ; the manufacture of cheap wood-pulp paper ; mechanization and improvements in transport ; the electric telegraph ; concentration of peoples in urban areas, and increasing literacy among the people of the West. These things, part of the industrial revolution, were coupled with the desire of common men to share in the news and opinions of others which had hitherto been the privilege of the governing classes. Thus began the free flow of information which soon became a flood that defied attempts to control it.

The mechanical methods of reproduction and improvements in transport and communication which had begun in the early nineteenth century reached their peak early in the twentieth. With the tremendous increase in the flow of information came the need for some regulation of the conditions and terms of labour of workers in the industry, and also the glimmerings of a philosophy of mass communication, as something over and above the production of a saleable commodity. Out of the initial disorder and incoherence of the newspaper industry came the need for order and method.

Although newspapers as commercial enterprises were highly profitable, so that family fortunes were made from them by their owners, the workers in the industry were discontented with their wages and conditions. It was as a result of such dissatisfaction and initially as part of the workers' own self-generated protective machinery that the early concept of Codes of Ethics grew.

Journalists had, by then, developed into a unique class of person. They were mostly of like temperament. They were strongly individualistic. Because of the ambivalent nature of their employment, part-trade part-profession, they had an antipathy to being organized. This often led, in countries where there was a developed newspaper structure, to their being exploited by their employers and to their not being accorded the financial recognition which they thought their role as communicators warranted.

In some countries journalists were among the first of the new generation of brain workers to see the advantage

to changes in a manufacturing process. The attachment which every man has or should have for the opinions of others, confers upon journalism an unquestionable right to esteem, although at the same time they expose it to certain danger. Upheavals in the realm of ideas have disastrous effects on the livelihood of journalists — much more so than economic upheavals.»

That ILO Report is in fact the historic starting point for any world-wide study of present day Codes of Ethics. In it we find, apart from what had already happened in the Nordic Countries, the first constructive thoughts about professional ethics, although the prime task was considered to be that of enabling journalists everywhere to earn a living wage and to have reasonable conditions of work. These first international manifestations were essentially to protect working journalists from unreasonable demands made by those who employed them and to give effective force to the nature and security of their professional status.

In subsequent years, Codes of Ethics have developed in both scope and concept. They have often been misapplied to protect established regimes and governments from criticism. They have been adopted and adapted for many other protective purposes, notably that of guarding the public, though their origins were essentially at the working end of journalism.

A number of attempts have been made to draft regional or international codes of ethics. The oldest would seem to be the Code of Journalistic Ethics adopted by the first Pan-American Press Conference held in Washington in 1926 and later by the Inter-American Press Conference held in New York in October 1950, where it was reaffirmed and adopted as the creed of the Inter-American Press Association. The first international Federation of Journalists, founded in 1926 and dissolved after the Second World War, took various steps aimed at self-regulation by the profession, including the establishment of an International Court of Honour in The Hague in 1931 and the adoption of a professional code of honour in 1939.

The International Federation of Associations of Newspaper Managers and Publishers, founded in 1933, affirmed at several of its congresses the principle of immediate correction of false news and drew up agreements on this subject for signature by its constituent associations. The International Union of Press Associations adopted a set of principles in 1936.

Several of the international associations active at present have also worked in this field. The Inter-American Association of Broadcasters (IAAB) adopted a Declaration of Ethical Principles at its Lima Assembly in 1955. This declaration defines the essential functions of broadcasting, its international mission and the obligation of those engaged in it as regards educational, scientific and cultural programmes. A number of member organizations

of the IAAB have formulated their own codes of ethics, taking into consideration the principles enunciated in the Lima Declaration.

*The International Federation of Journalists*, founded in 1952, also leaned towards professional ethics of journalists and it was in Bordeaux in 1954, at the time of the Second Congress of the Federation, that a declaration of journalists' duties was adopted. According to François Geyer (1), «this declaration prohibits such serious faults in professional behaviour as the use of «incorrect» methods to obtain information, photographs or documents, the breach of professional secrecy concerning sources, the acceptance of receiving any remuneration whatever for the publication or suppression of information. The «Bordeaux Declaration» formulates a principle which seems to have become widely and easily accepted in a profession which, in the West at least, is inclined to be distrustful of the State, whether it guarantees or not, on paper, freedom of the press, and of other powers, such as money and, essentially, owners of newspapers: «The journalist only accepts, professionally, while recognizing the acknowledged right of every country, the jurisdiction of his equals, to the exclusion of any other interference, governmental or other.»

No doubt this rule strongly contributed to retarding the creation of mixed or multilateral Press Councils, insofar as these would have subjected journalists falling into their jurisdiction to the judgment of non-journalists, newspaper publishers, or representatives of the public, in truth, of the State.

Nevertheless, the rule remains important to many European journalists who, for it, are ready to sacrifice the development of institutions of ethical control of which, at other moments, they deplore the absence.

The Bordeaux Declaration remains operative as far as the International Federation of Journalists is concerned, although it is difficult to judge to what extent journalists — members of the syndicates, federations and national associations affiliated to the IFJ — are aware of the existence of this text and, moreover, strictly observe the principles it sets forth.»

Six journalists trade unions of the European Community adopted in November 1971 at Munich the Declaration of Duties and Rights of Journalists. The text is given in full in the Appendix. It is an interesting document in that it is in two parts, the first outlining the duties and responsibilities of journalists and the second defining their rights and their protections. It is not always that Codes of Ethics combine this dual purpose quite so clearly. Often the rights tend to get somewhat blurred and the five clauses in the Declaration of Rights are worthy of detailed study.

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(1) François Geyer : Codes of Ethics in the International Press, IFJ, 1975.

Is not respect for certain ethical principles on the part of the media an interesting problem above all for Unesco? Of course, that organization is an inter-governmental organization and in its capacity it is perhaps not its bodies which we would wish to see resolve the question – but, offering a universal terrain for meeting and dialogue, couldn't it, through the initiative of its «good offices», prepare and organize an assembly which would be attended by the qualified spokesmen of journalists?»

In a meeting of consultation organized at Unesco House in November 1973 the IOJ has proposed a Draft concerning professional codes of ethics which can be found in the Appendix (See Appendix 10).

*The Latin American Federation of Journalists (FELAP)* founded in 1976 in Mexico City, having at present 60,000 members, is also interested in these questions. FELAP does not have a code of ethics but a «Declaration of Principles», approved by 12 organizations, and of which the following are the main principles of professional ethics :

«Freedom of the press is conceived of as being the right of our peoples to be informed in an appropriate and truthful manner and to express their opinions without any restrictions other than those that are in the better interest of the people themselves.

Thus FELAP fights for change of the ownership system of the media. In order to extricate it from the hands of the dominating classes, that serve imperialist interests and subjugate the Latin American people, FELAP.

Declares that the journalist has a political and ideological responsibility which derives from the nature of his profession, which influences the conscience of the masses, and that this responsibility is fundamental, and constitutes the essence of his social function.

Affirms that cultural formation and education should reflect a critical and questioning attitude in order to further the cause of the people and so, should be within the reach of the national majorities and in conformity with their interests.

Declares itself anti-fascist and opposes all terrorist regimes dedicated to the oppression of the people.

Supports the defense of human rights and dignity and marches alongside those who are in favour of social changes within the specific circumstances of each country.

Finally, FELAP solemnly declares that it is not and will never be divorced from the interests of the peoples of our continent.»

*Draft International Code of Ethics (United Nations).* Perhaps the most extensive single effort to develop an international code of ethics has been carried out under the sponsorship of the United Nations. It was emphasized

throughout this effort, however, that in the final analysis any such code must be drawn up and accepted by the professionals themselves.

A first draft of an international code of ethics was prepared in 1950 by a group of 12 experts appointed by their governments but serving in an individual capacity on the United Nations Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and the Press. This draft was sent by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to approximately 500 professional organizations and mass media enterprises for their comments and suggestions, including their opinion on the basic question as to whether the code would serve a useful purpose.

The replies to the Secretary-General's inquiry were sufficiently numerous and representative in character to enable him to present to the sub-commission an analysis of the views of professional workers in many countries. The majority of the organizations which replied were of the opinion that the code would serve a useful purpose ; a large number emphasized that its further development was the responsibility of the profession.

In the light of the replies received, the sub-commission prepared a further draft of the code which was submitted in 1952 to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The council decided to communicate the draft International Code of Ethics to national and international professional associations and information enterprises for such action as they might deem appropriate. If they considered it desirable, it was stated, the United Nations might co-operate with them in organizing an international conference to complete work on the code.

The text of the Draft International Code of Ethics as sent to the profession for consideration never became operative.

The full text is given in the appendix but its basic thinking is that «Freedom of information and of the Press is a fundamental human right, and is the touchstone of all freedoms consecrated in the Charter of the United Nations and proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights».

Its preamble avers that freedom will be the better safeguarded when the personnel of the Press and of all other media of information constantly and voluntarily strive to maintain the highest sense of responsibility, being deeply imbued with the moral obligation to be truthful and to search for the truth in reporting, in explaining and in interpreting facts.

In addition to its stress on truth and high standards it also stresses that good faith with the public is the foundation of good journalism. It stresses the need for spontaneous and immediate correction. The failure to observe this simple rule has, in many countries, been a major contributory factor in the loss of credibility that the media of mass communication has sustained in recent years.

find that both these two divisions are themselves capable of sub-division into two further categories. There are those Codes which have been :

- i. Formulated by agreement from within the media and are operated, usually, more to the ultimate advantage of media persons than that of the general public.
- ii. Formulated from outside and imposed, with varying degrees of effectiveness from outside the media, in order to protect the consumer. In media terms the consumer can be (a) the reader, the listener or the viewer, who in one way or another buys the product to be informed or entertained, or the consumer can be (b) the advertiser or anyone who buys and uses the media's services, for the purposes of promoting commercial, professional or political interests.

We now have broken down the Codes into those which are mandatory and those which are voluntary, with the sub-divisions of those which are formulated by agreement from within the media and those which are imposed from outside. To complicate matters not all Codes can be seen to be as clearly divided as the above. There have been occasions when a Code is a compromise solution, but that perhaps only makes what is complicated enough, even more confusing !

Within the total world of the mass communications media all the Codes, whichever of the above categories they fall into, can be said to operate in four different ways :

1. They can include everything which can be described as communications from print-journalism in all its forms (newspapers, magazines, books, etc.), film and the theatre ; to all the varieties of broadcasting, electronic and computer retrieval communication.
2. They can include everything which is communicated, from editorial content in its widest sense of education, information and entertainment ; through to advertising in all its forms from direct commodity advertising to sponsorship, etc. ; and they can also include distribution and marketing practices, promotion methods, whether for the medium itself or for clients who pay for it to be done on their behalf.
3. They can be confined to well-defined and specific aspects of media communication in the sense that they deal only with print-journalism ; or with radio ; or with television ; or with film ; or with theatre ; or with the electronic/computer information systems which combine elements of print-journalism and television broadcasting (e.g. CEEFAX, ORACLE, VIEW-DATA, EURONET, Etc.)
4. They can be confined and sub-divided even within certain sections of the industry itself, so that they deal in print-journalism terms only with newspaper editorial matter (news and current affairs) ; or with newspaper advertising (further sub-divided into national advertising and local advertising) ; or with

newspaper sales and promotion methods. Alternatively they can, in the field of broadcasting, affect only non-commercial radio or television ; commercial radio or television ; cable-vision ; or in broadcasting deal only with the news and current affairs out-put ; only with script-writers for documentary and similar programmes ; broadcast advertising matter or the agencies which devise and produce commercial advertising programmes. They may also have different application when applied to the communication methods adopted by separate ethnic/religious minorities within the larger community when it is felt that special treatment needs to exist.

If we take all the various options which have been listed so far, it becomes possible that one country which has a well-developed and sophisticated mass communications system, can have ten or more ethical bodies, each one with its own standards and therefore its own Code of Ethics. Though all the Codes may have a common aim they are likely to vary in their approach and their methods of administration. In one section of the mass media industry the Code might be a voluntary one ; it might have been imposed from inside ; in another section of the industry it might be a mandatory Code imposed from outside ; one Code may be primarily to protect the people working in the industry from other sections of the same industry, and so forth.

In a country sufficiently advanced to have such a multiplicity of professional bodies and Ethical Codes, there is then need for some form of inter-communication and arbitration, official or unofficial. This may come from a supra-media body ; or a Standing Conference, or it may not. Internal conflicts have been known to happen where two ethical bodies have not been in complete agreement one with another.

In considering the complex pattern of Codes of Ethics which has already evolved, it must also be recognized that in addition to the general aims, the methods of formulation, and the methods of operation, which we have so far looked at, there are yet further divisions which have to be taken into account. These are the divisions which relate most closely to the particular categories of persons whom the Codes are designed to protect. For example, they may be :

1. Intended chiefly to protect the consumer.
2. Intended to protect the media worker.
3. Designed to protect the interests of the owner. This may be (a) a single person ; (b) a group of shareholders ect. ; or (c) a government. The interests of the first two, owners and shareholders, are likely to be primarily financial. Of the last named, the government, they are likely to be political and concerned with the maintenance of stable government.
4. Intended to protect the person who has to accept full legal responsibility for whatever is published and who in the eyes of the public and the law would

## Section three — World Survey

### A—EUROPE

#### 1. BELGIUM

Though its Press Code dates only from the years after World War Two, Belgium has one of the most thorough Codes in existence. It was the outcome of the 25th National Belgian Press Conference, held in 1947, and was first published in 1951. Unlike many other media codes which have remained static and unaltered, this one has been revised when necessary and from time to time. It is regarded as a live and evolving instrument.

The Code takes up over 200 pages and it is contained in over 200 clauses, setting out in detail the journalist's rights, his duties, and the working of the Court of Honour.

The Code is based on a number of main principles which emerged from the discussions of the 25th Press Conference. In themselves they were of merit but often lacked definition and bite. In so many instances principles like this have then been adopted and enshrined as a national Code, that being the end of the matter. But not so in Belgium. It was never intended that they should be other than they were ; a starting point from which something precise could be produced. The thinking was that from a large and general conference only general thoughts could emerge. So small working groups got together to produce something precise which could be backed up by the General Association of the Belgian Press, which has a permanent committee working on the whole question of professional ethics. The Association and its committee are so efficient and thorough, that nobody in Belgium has ever felt the need for a Media Council on United Kingdom Press Council lines and indeed the Belgian journalist has tended in discussion to be somewhat scornful of countries where media councils are necessary.

It would not be possible within the scope of this study to do justice to the detail contained in *«The Rights and Duties of the Journalist»* by Joseph Demarteau and Leon Duwaerts. But the main principles of the 1947 Conference, despite the diffuseness already mentioned, are still worth quoting in full. They are :

«The journalist's mission is to serve. This does not imply servitude in any form, but his willingness to be useful to the nation and to the whole human community, while keeping inviolable his independence and justifiable pride in his profession.

«As well as other objectives, the journalist may legitimately serve a man, a group, a party or a specific cause, provided the service does not run counter to his own convictions and to his dignity as a man and a writer.

But whatever may be his specific aims and functions in the Press, the journalist must in all cases serve the common weal, the truth, and his profession.

«He can show that he is serving the common weal by promoting and defending all material, spiritual, intellectual and moral property which is in the interests of the national community to safeguard. He will extend this service to the international field and will do his utmost to facilitate intellectual contact between different peoples in order to facilitate the achievement of a real and equitable peace.

«In order to maintain his prestige in what he undertakes for the common weal, he will carefully avoid all that might give rise to a suspicion that, in performing his mission he is serving his personal interests.

«Without giving up his claims on the right to maintain professional secrecy, which have been set down at several previous congresses, the journalist will show himself, in a practical way, to be servant of truth in the struggle of ideas by giving proof of his own sincerity and showing respect for that of others.

«When setting down facts, his duty to truthfulness does not oblige him to reveal all he knows. Consideration for the legitimate interests of another or for the reputation of another, may not only justify but even require his silence, while at the same time he cannot be obliged to risk his own reputation in order to safeguard that of another.

«He has the right to make a mistake in good faith. But he is committing a professional sin if he sets down facts without making a personal effort to obtain correct information or if he publishes, with no reservations, allegations which do not come from a reliable source, he is being thoroughly dishonest if he states what he knows to be wrong or if he refuses to correct a mistake as soon as he becomes aware of it.

«The journalist will serve his profession by these means :

«Taking an active part in professional organizations.  
«Behaving as a good colleague towards other journalists, particularly towards those whose rights may be infringed or who might arbitrarily be thwarted in the performance of their mission.

«In adding to the good reputation and prestige of the profession by behaving correctly».

To spell these out in detail as the Code goes on to do, is no mean achievement, especially as Belgium, small country though it may be in area, is not only densely populated but also has a considerable degree of biculturalism and in consequence a very mixed mass communications structure.

members. So, on a matter of principle, there has been this refusal to be part of the Press Council. This spirit of independence is continued in the joint discussions about a newspaper Code of Ethics.

Apart from the period of Occupation from 1940-1945 when the Press was strictly controlled and censored, Denmark's of Press freedom, bound up with its strong sense of Press responsibility, has been an example to many other countries. Freedom of the Press is a principle embodied in the Constitution, and in 1970 there was an extension when further legislation was enacted enshrining the principle of open administration and publicity for all governmental matters except where questions of strict national security were involved.

It can well be argued that Denmark is another of the very few countries in the world where the Press can be trusted to operate in the best interests of the community, without there being any formalized Code of Ethics.

Radio Denmark's news service has a highly individualistic set of rules, and though they are too long to reproduce here in full, there are some points from them which are worth quoting :

«The news service is under the obligation to bring speedy and correct information, but correctness shall always have priority over speed. If there should be any doubt about the correctness, Radio Denmark should refrain from bringing such news...»

Radio Denmark does not work according to the special legal provisions applying to the Press, meaning amongst other things that neither the employee nor Radio Denmark has any legal bases for respecting the anonymity of any given source...»

«Versatility is to be understood in the way that all views of a political and related nature which are of general interest shall be heard. A reasonable balance must be maintained between different views with due regard to the news value of the question. Points of view levelled against democracy must not pass unchallenged. Care must be taken that opinions against democracy are not given in apparently unpolitical programmes...»

«Privacy must be respected. Each individual has a right of protection of his personal reputation. The utmost regard possible for other persons is a journalistic prerequisite...»

«Correction must be brought as soon as possible and as far as it is possible in the same programme or time of transmission in which the incorrect information was given...»

Then there are the Special Rules concerning legal matters already mentioned. These cover in detail such things as :-

«Never anticipating guilt ; if giving information about an arrest or imprisonment, the authority giving the information must be expressly quoted ; names of accused persons should be omitted provided no general interest calls for publication ; if the name is mentioned the

guiding principle for so doing is the character of the crime rather than the identity of the perpetrator ; names are also only mentioned when the accused pleads guilty or is given at least a year's prison sentence ; names of persons under 21 years of age must never be mentioned ; names of victims or witnesses of a crime should not ordinarily be mentioned and never in sexual cases ; in general no mention must be made of previous convictions ; family relations, race, creed or organizational affiliations of an accused or of a convicted person should not be mentioned unless it has a distinct bearing on the case.»

These rules if applied in a number of other countries studied, e.g. the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia — to mention only three — would very strictly limit the present extensive crime coverage, which is a lucrative source of material on the one hand but on the other is a very frequent source of criticism of the media for its lack of community responsibility, predilection for trivia and for its sensationalism. Many of the Danish clauses are logical extensions of the relevant provisions of the Nordic Charter of Human Rights.

## 5. FINLAND

Finland lays claim to be the «founding father» of media councils and Press Courts of Honour. This claim would indeed seem to be justified. But for various reasons, having originated the concept, the country then found no pressing need to develop it actively.

Finland's Freedom of the Press Act goes back to April 1st 1919, and from it the Court of Honour of the Finnish Press was founded. For nearly fifty years it was dormant, and though neighbouring Nordic countries forged ahead with Media Councils, Press Codes, etc. it was not until December 1968 that Finland's Council for the Mass Media arose like a phoenix. Unlike practically any other Media Council it is all-embracing and covers newspapers, periodicals and broadcasting. It is a small council, just as Finland is a small country with a relatively small mass media structure. The total newspaper circulation for instance is only in the region of half a million.

Nevertheless Finland's Media Council is a model of what a media council should be, with 12 members, four representing journalists, four representing the publishers, and four laymen, together with a judicial chairman.

Any member of the public can bring a complaint against a newspaper, magazine, radio or television station for a breach of the Code of Ethical Practice. Sanctions are limited to publicity of the council's findings.

The Code of Ethics is more specific than most, insofar as it spells out the treatment of news items concerning juvenile delinquents, sexual crimes and suicides — the fact that someone has taken his or her own life must never be mentioned.



accordance with the resolution in Munich on 25 November 1971 by the European Journalists' Unions setting out the moral principles of the profession and its guarantees of independence.

10. The national education system should promote the critical study of the news media ; student newspapers should be accorded official recognition and be entitled to the assistance provided for other newspapers.
11. The unhampered distribution of publications purveying news and views will be guaranteed in educational establishments, barracks and prisons.
12. Measures pertaining to related sectors like newsprint and distribution services will be worked out by all the parties concerned.

The Twelve Points of this Charter have been quoted in full because of the Charter's Gallic thoroughness, and because it is a model of its kind. It accepts the moral principles set out by the European Journalists' Unions and so covers adequately ethical issues. But it has, in addition, the recognition of the fact that in France education has always been a matter of some seriousness in the clauses supporting student newspapers ; requiring the national education system to promote the critical study of the news media, etc. ; but above all for the requirement that there be unhampered distribution of the news media in «educational establishments, barracks and prisons». Most prison systems now allow controlled distribution only of the news media. The writing of «unhampered distribution... to barracks and prisons» into the Charter is advanced thinking.

The philosophy behind the Charter is clearly set out in two paragraphs :

«The function of the Press is to help the public exercise its right to be informed. In order that as large a part of the public as possible may have access to information, the nation has a duty to assist businesses which help the public exercise this right.

«It is necessary therefore to make a distinction between publishing houses whose principal objective is profit and those which perform a public service. General interest press establishments of the second category which alone qualify for government assistance must meet standards which disclose the nature of the business».

There are three criteria for this : that effective responsibility for handling editorial matter and for appointing the managing director and the head of the editorial service shall rest with the journalists ; that at least half the column area shall be devoted to political, economic, social and cultural news ; and that a substantial part of the newspaper's income shall come from its sales.

In very few other countries could many newspapers satisfy all three of these criteria. The general trend is certainly towards the first, though in many countries it would stop at journalists having effective responsibility

for appointing the head of the editorial services, and not extend to the managing director as well. The 50-50 editorial-advertising requirement, i.e. of half the column area being devoted to news and informed comment in the current economic conditions, could only be realistically achieved with some form of external financial assistance. Production costs everywhere in the developed world when set against a cover price which is what people will afford, and against income from the sale of advertising space, necessitate SUBSIDY. And if there are to be subsidies then there must also be very clear guidelines about the ethical principles which are involved.

## 7. GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The preambular of the articles of the Association of Journalists in the GDR is unequivocal in stating : «Under the leadership of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) its members working in the press, radio and television in ADN and other journalist institutions contribute by their work to the formation and strengthening of socialist convictions and to the discussion with reactionary bourgeois ideologies. Being faithful and reliable co-militants of the Party of the working class and the Government, they contribute their convincing, gripping publicistic work reflecting real life to the further growth of the developed socialist society. Devoted to the cause of the working class, the cause of the entire people, in brotherly alliance with the Soviet Union, the members of the Association of Journalists in the GDR work actively to strengthen the German Democratic Republic which — as a socialist state — forms part of the community of socialist states».

The main task of the Association is to enable its members to accept the high responsibility as journalists of a developed socialist country to an ever improving extent. In doing so, it advocates journalistic cleanliness and adherence to the principles of socialist ethics and morals. (§1).

Membership of the association is wider than in some of the other CMEA (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance) countries, because it may be granted to citizens of the GDR employed «as journalists in editorial departments, in journalistic and other institutions of the GDR, press designers, heads of publishing houses, lecturers, press department representatives, documentation department employees, archivists, scientists and students of the journalistic section, teachers of professional schools of journalism, free lance journalists having a legal licence.»

The violation of socialist ethics or morals is a reason for expulsion of a member from the Association. In accordance with the Statutes of the Association, «Members violating the Statutes or acting against resolutions taken, harming the prestige of the journalistic profession or its professional organization, violating socialist ethics or morals, can be reproved or reprimanded, struck off the membership list or expelled from the Association by the district head office.» (§6)



This has meant that by the time German Press Laws were passed they had been thoroughly thrashed out by Press interests, discussed, amendments suggested where necessary, and the ultimate result was acceptable to Press and Government alike. The United Kingdom Press Council has tended to keep a watching brief but only from afar, to make representation usually in the form of protest or objection, but never to work with Government draftsmen in any detailed way, over matters of law affecting the Press.

The German Press Council has also laid down strict rules of conduct for journalists and though they are not mandatory, nor would be binding in a court of law, all the Press organizations take effective steps to see that their own members observe them, believing that it is only by making it clear that the self-disciplinary system works, that they can avoid government control, and such control they would find abhorrent. This again is a different state of affairs from the United Kingdom, where the constituent bodies take no formal steps to reinforce any disciplinary comment of the Press Council on members, and furthermore are inclined to argue internally about the degree of their own funding support for that body.

Many of the German Press Council's Ethical Clauses are such as one would expect to find in any Code which tries to reconcile the interests of two major bodies such as the Journalists' Union and the Federal Association of Newspaper Publishers. However there are a couple of other clauses worth more detailed examination :

«Written and pictorial news and information intended for publication is to be examined for its factual content with all the care due in the circumstances. Its meaning must not be distorted or falsified by adaptation, headline or picture caption. Documents must be reproduced faithfully. Unconfirmed reports, rumours and suppositions must be recognizable as such. When printing «purely illustrative» pictures, a caption must indicate that they are not documentary pictures.»

This clause would seem to demand a greater degree of responsibility for accuracy than exists in some countries. Particularly with its reference to «unconfirmed reports» etc., the obligation on newspapers seems quite clear. The part of this clause relating to the use of photographs is also interesting and much more strongly worded than in many countries. Many people have felt that their privacy has been invaded when newspapers have resurrected old photographs or by devious means have got hold of and published private photographs. The class of persons who most need this sort of protection is not that of well-known figures, who usually court publicity and only object when it does not suit them, but the private person who suddenly and often involuntarily becomes newsworthy. It is these who can be deeply hurt by the resurrection of archive-type photographs.

The «Right of Reply» is not legally enshrined in the Federal Republic of Germany as it is in France, and is included on a voluntary basis with a variation which in one sense makes it weaker and in another sense strengthens it.

«Publications printing news that subsequently proves to be incorrect must immediately publish an adequate retraction on their own initiative».

It is weaker in that it is confined to matters of fact that are objective enough to be capable of proof as to their correctness or error and it takes no account of subjective opinion. It is stronger in that it requires newspapers to make corrections «on their own initiative». This would assume that they do not have to wait until someone points out the error, if in the course of events they themselves have discovered that what was published was wrong. Strictly observed this does indicate a very well-developed sense of responsibility. In many countries the publishing of «an adequate retraction» is dependent upon a request for such publication to come from someone outside ; in many countries what is «adequate» is not defined and it can often lead to prolonged argument between the newspaper and the person concerned. «Adequate» can mean a simple correction of fact with or without any expression of regret ; it can govern the speed with which the correction is published ; its prominence in the newspaper columns and whether the wording is left entirely to the newspaper to draft or whether the correction is published only after both sides have seen and agreed upon the precise form of wording it shall take. This is one of those things which on paper seem to be quite simple and straightforward, yet which are fraught with difficulties and tensions when it comes to day to day practice.

On the score of invasion of privacy, there is, as one would expect, the basic assumption that «the Press must respect private lives» with the caveat that «if however a person's private conduct affects public interests, it can be covered by the Press». This is, of course, always something which defies absolute definition, but the German Press Code goes on to make a subtle addition which, if strictly observed in some other European countries, could bring about considerable changes in the kind of story which they now publish about «private and public» persons. It is : «at the time there must be examination for whether publication will violate the rights to privacy of persons unconnected with these events».

Again, in the light of the country's history over the last half century, it is not surprising that there should be such a clause as the following :

«Reports and pictures that can violate the moral and religious sensibilities of a certain group through their form and content, are incompatible with the responsibility of the Press» and this is coupled with «nobody can be discriminated against as a result of race, creed or nationality».

when he misbehaves in public, hinders other journalists in their work, commits plagiarism or accepts bribes. Sanctions are : a) warning ; b) reprimand ; c) strong reprimand ; d) suspension of member's rights (up to 1 year) ; e) expulsion.

The Committee of the Association has formulated the 'Procedure in the case of ethical offences', setting out the lines along which a case is to be led.

Appeal against the decision of the Ethical Commission can be lodged only at the Presidium, and against the Presidium's decision at the Committee within 8 days.

## 11. IRELAND

There is no separate journalists' organization for Ireland, though the Eirean newspaper proprietors have their own protective society. Journalists throughout Ireland observe the Code of Ethics drawn up by the United Kingdom's National Union of Journalists.

Ireland, despite the fact that it is an island of conflict and the fact that there have been strong criticisms recently of coverage of the affairs of Ireland in the British media, has really very little self-disciplinary machinery.

The United Kingdom National Union of Journalists' Code has recently been strengthened by a new set of guidelines on the reporting of stories with racial implications (see United Kingdom). In general the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists' guidelines lean heavily towards the self-protective and do not deal ethically with the reporting of violence and in particular with violence caused by religious strife. The racial guidelines were drawn up in consultation with the United Kingdom Community Relations Commission to deal with racial (i.e. colour) problems, though they do mention religious differences. Even this is thought of more in terms of Christianity on the one hand and other religions on the other, rather than the conflict between Irish Catholics and Protestants.

There is a strong feeling that the media should be playing a constructive role in the overall situation instead of aggravating the position.

Up to the middle of 1976, newspapers, radio and television had been giving the religious affiliation of murder and violence victims and of the perpetrators of the attacks. It was felt that the doing of this increased the risk of retaliation. An Eirean television journalist writing in one of Dublin's leading newspapers said «none of us who report on Northern Ireland can be free from the fear that, in some obscure ways, there is blood on our hands». This led to meetings between media people and the authorities and the agreement that as a beginning, the use of the description Catholic or Protestant should be dropped. It was also recognized that, long-term, there was considerable scope for «softening effects of responsible journalism through refusing

prominence, modifying the tone and treatment of a story and in shortening its length». This comes not from any directive by a media council nor from the dictates of any government or similar authority. It is a valuable indication of the importance of media people themselves discussing and considering their role when they are closely involved in conflict journalism.

There have recently also been discussions which might lead to the formation of a Media Council, charged with the formulation of a Code of Ethics, suited to Eirean needs.

## 12. ISRAEL

Within the boundaries of Israel, and the country is comparatively small with a good road infrastructure, newspapers are well distributed and well read. Radio and television are highly professional. But Israel also takes strong cognizance of the performance of mass communications media throughout the rest of the world, and in particular of Jewish Journalists and the Jewish Press in the Diaspora.

The Press Council in Israel was set up in 1963 by journalists, editors and publishers voluntarily and working in unison. It received the blessing of the then Prime Minister who said it was gratifying that the Press itself had seen «the need for an institution to prevent as far as possible aberrations from the path of responsibility and truth».

The use of the word «aberrations» in this context is of itself an indication of the general thinking towards the Press. In many countries the authorities would not regard the behaviour of certain sections of the media as just an «aberration» but as something which was distinctly hostile and took up maliciously an adversary role !

The next year (1964) the Israel Press Council promulgated a Code to which no one could take exception and which, among other things, strongly condemned «incitement against persons and unfounded accusations on a national, communal, religious or racial basis».

It also enshrined, albeit as a voluntary act, the right of reply to anyone whose name or reputation had been harmed.

Infringements of the Code are dealt with by the Press Council on complaint from any organization or individual.

In an Appendix the Code lays down specific guidelines to the fairly ubiquitous clause that says «journalists may not accept any benefits that could influence their writing...»

These guidelines say that a journalist must not solicit reductions for his own person from institutions or organizations with which he has professional connections. Reduction in the cost of tickets for artistic and cultural events, for instance, can only be made collectively through the Journalists' Association and other reductions have to be sanctioned by the Press Council itself. Travel

other countries in Europe, in that many of the Italian newspapers, particularly the large and influential dailies, are not competitively commercial enterprises like their counterparts in the United Kingdom, France and Federal Republic of Germany. They are components of larger enterprises and have been regarded by their owners, usually big industrialists with many other successful and bigger profit-making business activities, as a means of exerting pressure on the government, on politicians or on other economic groups. At times when Italy's total national economy is on a down-swing, the Press is therefore highly vulnerable. There is strong concern among the unions that the Press will only survive if it is reformed on a more rational basis. If this happens, it is possible that some ethical concern for its conduct in the future may arise.

The position in radio and television on the other hand is more promising and under more control. Guidelines which are akin to those adopted elsewhere are followed. Financially television has creamed off much of Italy's richest advertising revenue and television has a greater credibility than newspapers. This «creaming off» of worthwhile advertising by television has been a severe economic blow to newspapers in most countries where commercial newspapers and commercial television have to co-exist ; it has put large advertisers and advertising agencies in a particularly strong position. It is difficult to assess the exact degree to which they can consequently dictate editorial policies, because the attitudes and strength of the editorial resistance vary within a country and from country to country. There are unquantified influences from advertisers which tend to increase as the economic profitability of the newspaper decreases. Since at present television is mainly the favoured form of advertising such pressures are less consciously felt within that medium, but even there they are exerted in many instances with the covert threat, either of reduction or of the withdrawal of highly profitable income. Voluntary codes can go some way to keep this sort of thing in check, but they are powerless to eliminate it entirely.

The Code of Ethics of the National Council of the Italian Press (1957) is worth looking at, more for its deficiencies than for its incisiveness. It is another example of the fact that if principles are stated in terms which are too general, they then become meaningless and ineffective.

Clause one, for instance, states :

«Freedom of information is an inalienable right...

«This means that every journalist is at liberty to collect news, screen it or publish it, in accordance with the actual facts...»

There is nothing however to qualify the manner in which «every journalist is at liberty to collect news».

There follow two clauses, one of which respects the «public's right to be fully and objectively informed

regardless of all ulterior interest» and another which requires adherence to the truth and that «the facts be interpreted without bias and faithfully reported».

A study of the actual situation in Italy or elsewhere shows that in practice statements of this kind mean nothing, unless backed by the threat of very strong disciplinary action, or at the very least the building-up (as in the United Kingdom) of a considerable volume of codified case law, through which vague ethical rules can be interpreted. General statements, however well meaning, are of no value in isolation. There needs to be either the backing of the aforesaid case law, which can take a quarter of a century at least to build up before it is of any value, or a great many sub-clauses and definitions in amplification. To a great extent the choice of which procedure to follow must depend upon the general legal system and legal philosophy of the country concerned.

In the United Kingdom much of the legal system is concerned with case law and its interpretation and so it was logical for the United Kingdom Press Council to follow a similar pattern. In countries where the law is more precisely defined ; more offences are statutory ones ; and the inquisitorial legal system is followed ; Codes and Media Councils have taken on the colour of their appropriate legal system.

The Italian Code has another two clauses which of themselves are well meaning, but which also are too vague in interpretation ; they are :

«The publication of news or comment must never outrage the moral conscience of the public»

«Unhealthy instincts must never be fostered nor must harmful feelings be stimulated or supported».

He would be a clever man who could ever define «the moral conscience of the public» in Italy, or anywhere else for that matter ! And it is entirely a subjective matter as to what are «unhealthy instincts» or «harmful feelings». Loose phrases like this do more harm to the concept of any Code of Ethical practice or the work of a Media Council than they do good.

Dr. Guiseppe Martucci, Director of the Public Relations Institute in Rome, blames the present state of unhappiness in the Italian Press on the collapse of moral values which resulted from the disorders of the Second World War and says «it has been too difficult a matter in Italy to reconcile the demands of liberty with those of truth». From time to time the Public Prosecutor has stepped in to ban or to confiscate individual issues of newspapers or magazines, but the total effect on the media has been minimal. The fact that this can occur seems to be regarded merely as an occupational hazard or perhaps an irritant, but not a discipline.

In September 1959, a Bill establishing Press Courts of Honour was introduced by the Minister of Justice and approved by the Council of Ministers. The Bill provides machinery through which anyone who considers himself

matters the publisher or the board do not share these opinions. If he becomes involved in any insoluble conflict with the basic view of the newspaper, he is obliged to resign.

«In newspapers with no political purpose, the editor is expected to acknowledge the programme on which the newspaper is based.

«The editor is personally and entirely responsible for the editorial contents of the newspaper, and he must not be so misled as to assert opinions contrary to his conscience and conviction. He is in charge of, and bears the responsibility for the work of his staff».

The Declaration was accepted both by the Norwegian Editors and the Norwegian Newspaper Owners in 1953.

The general guidelines on the exercise of care start off by stating :

«The printed word is a mighty weapon, take care not to misuse it. The damage liable to be caused by the thoughtlessness and mistakes committed by representatives of the Press is often more far-reaching and profound than anyone can see. Be considerate and cautious, be thoughtful and chivalrous. For all you know the welfare of your fellow countrymen may be at stake...»

It also states that nothing is more likely to undermine confidence in the Press than erroneous or misleading reports and articles.

On the question of publishing anything that is liable to damage someone's good name and reputation it is stated... «a subsequent dementi and apology can never really make good the damage that has been inflicted...»

On the protection of the anonymity of sources of information the guidelines make the point that if the name and nature of the source are not revealed there must then be «... great caution in the appraisal of such sources and authors ; in cases of this kind the entire onus rests with the journalist. Bear in mind that there are a lot of people who are only too anxious to exploit a newspaper in order to pay off old scores or lord it over their fellow men. Never make use of information or reports sent in by anonymous persons...»

Corrections should be made properly and immediately, and it is stated «Do not be afraid to admit your mistake and to apologize. And be as ready as you can to accept in your columns dementis and refutations sent in by individuals and institutions that have been attacked or have been the subject of erroneous information, provided of course that the insert in question is of reasonable length and does not descend to the depths of mere vituperation...»

The special rules for reporting courts and crimes follow the broad principle that a person is innocent until proved guilty and should be treated as such. There is an interesting point made in the request not to «present attacks or accusations by witnesses, counsel or others in

a sensational way, or in such a manner that they have the appearance of establishing fact». In any country where the legal system is based on accusatorial rather than the inquisitorial principles, and where the reporting of court procedures carries journalistic privilege, this is an important point. In countries where the Press frequently gives prominence to wild and untrue accusations made under Court privilege, often against third parties not present who have no power of reply, there have been moves to try to introduce legislation to limit Press coverage. Writing it into an Ethical Code, as in Norway, could well remove the need for legislation.

There is also the injunction to «be careful not to recall past crimes and offences that have already been atoned for». Again in some countries it has already been necessary to pass legislation prohibiting the recalling of sentences. In the United Kingdom, for instance, there is now The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act of 1974 which, inter alia, protects a rehabilitated person from unauthorized disclosure of spent convictions.

There are two other relevant and humane injunctions. One is «Never forget your duty to the family and friends of a law breaker» and «In all your work you must be careful not to upset the peace of family life except where weighty considerations affecting the well being of the general community make it absolutely imperative to publicize family matters».

Complaints of offences against the guidelines for newspapermen are usually dealt with by the Norwegian Press Council, which has no legal sanction apart from that of publication of its findings.

The Norwegian Broadcasting Association in its Code stresses that the Association's sole right to radio and TV transmissions imposes a special duty to convey news in a correct, objective, unsensational and diversified manner. «It must be borne in mind that news emanating from an institution which enjoys a monopoly of the kind enjoyed by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation may well produce a stronger effect than a newspaper report, and that it is not subject to the same degree of rebuttal by a similar and rival organ».

## 16. POLAND

Poland not only has a strong journalists' association, but the country is also the home of two major organizations, both of which are deeply concerned with the ethics of mass communication. The first is Interpress which in part is a press and publishing organization that informs foreign countries about Poland, but it also publishes a considerable amount of material connected with the practice and philosophy of mass media. The other is the Press Research Centre OBP which takes cognizance of the whole social process of press functioning in order to improve its course in the socialist society. The investigations carried on by the Centre provide : a descriptive knowledge of the modern press and its social functioning ;

During the period 1960-1969 there was, in Sweden, much discussion which led to the Media Council being remodelled in such a manner as to accommodate most of its critics, together with the innovation of a Press Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman concept is essentially Swedish and has never been transplanted really successfully, though other countries have from time to time tried to copy the idea.

In this instance, that of the remodelled Press Council, it was upon the Ombudsman that responsibility fell for coping with many of the previous deficiencies. He had, for instance, to accept the accusatory role, since it was felt that the Council itself should not be both prosecutor and judge in its own court. He was, in addition to initiating complaints against the Press, to act as mediator, to advise both the Press and the public and in general to act as a link between complainants who were in need of guidance and the Council. He has been remarkably successful, though it is a far from certain whether his equivalent would function so successfully anywhere but in Sweden.

The Swedish Press Council is another of those bodies which do not believe in the formulation of firm rules but which prefer to work on a principle of codification. This does not mean that Sweden is or has been without its written Press Code. At the present time both the Press Code, and the working of the Press Council and of the Radio Council which deals ethically with broadcasting, are under revision by a State Investigatory Committee. This is in order to discover what revisions are currently needed to bring precept and practice up-to-date.

Both the Journalists' Federation and the Publicists' Club have had their Codes for some time; the latter adopted theirs around the 1920's. Both have been updated from time to time. Both have much in common, save that the Journalists have a clause encouraging them to «resist humiliating assignments on ethical grounds».

The Publicists' Club deals with matters of the Security of the Nation; the separation of fact from opinion; the right of equal space and opportunity for «warranted rejoinders and correction», and some special guidelines for reporting crime.

These crime reporting guidelines are particularly thorough and advanced in their thinking. They include at least one clause which would cause raised eyebrows in some countries:

«Measures taken by the authorities caused by the negligence or misdemeanour of civil servants should not be published unless the misdemeanour is very grave or there is a principle involved».

There is another, in the same vein, which enjoins the Press to «Avoid detailed description of crime».

«As a rule do not publish names until a verdict has been declared and never if conditional sentence, Borstal or protective supervision may be considered».

«Avoid publication of names when sentences of two years imprisonment or less are applied».

«If the name of the suspect or convicted person is not published then do not disclose profession, age or other personal data in such a way as to hint whom is meant».

«The publication of names is a hard blow, not only to the person named but also to his family».

«Data taken from investigation of the personal history of a suspect which has been undertaken to determine the form of punishment should, as a rule, not be published. Do not unearth offences irrelevant to the actual case».

«In your headline or posters or otherwise, do not emphasize race, or nationality of the suspect or convict, if this is irrelevant. The same principle applies also to designation of profession, political viewpoints or religious opinions».

It will be noted that this code lays down direct rules for reporting trials and police investigations. This is because a special responsibility is placed upon the Press Ombudsman to see that these guidelines are strictly followed, not merely as a matter of high ethical conduct on the part of the Press, but also as part of Sweden's overall criminal policy, with aims more at rehabilitation of offenders than at their punishment.

The Union of Swedish Journalists, whose Code came later than that of the Publicists, «maintains that the media should exercise their functions of watching society with vigour and intrepidity. This should, however, be done within the limits determined by common interest, which must not be confounded with a curiosity harmful to the sanctity of privacy. Our Code is not only a collection of rules in that it is also intended to stimulate a continued debate inside the Union of Journalists on ethical questions of the job».

In the early 1960's there was considerable discussion over the problem which is often dealt with inadequately in many Codes of Ethics — external pressures on the Press by outside commercial interests. Practice varies widely, not only from country to country, but often from paper to paper within a country, or even within a community. Often the variation comes from nothing other than the subjective opinion of the editor or journalist concerned, over what is justifiable information and what should be paid-for advertising. It is well known that getting «favourable free editorial mention» for business organizations is of itself «big business».

The Swedish Newspaper Publishers Association has been inspired both by ethical motives and by financial reward, to stop the infringement of editorial space by «hidden persuaders», because «it is a betrayal of the reader, carries a risk of corrupting the journalist, and of damaging the credibility of the Press». It also «deprives the instigators of their motivation to pay their way through advertising»! This is a very nice juxtaposition of high moral standards with high profit motives.

reputations ; exposing the private affairs of people in a discrediting fashion in cases unconcerned with public interest ; libel and slander ; abusing religious feelings ; deliberate misrepresentation of truth ; including personal convictions and views in the text ; publication of «confidential» information when not absolutely necessary for public interest ; misrepresentation of the text by distorted headlines.

Since 1960, all newspapers have mentioned in their first page that they respect the Press Code of Honour.

As regards the Press Honour Council, this board was active until the end of 1967 and handled 148 cases. Of these 102 were taken up upon complaint and 46 on their own. Seventy-two of the 148 cases were found to be against the Press Code of Honour ; 27 of these were found guilty, 33 were warned and 12 had their attention drawn to the matter. The Press Council was doomed to failure after 1967. Instead of it being enlarged to cope with an increasing volume of work, this was not done. The fact that the Council could not cope led a number of newspapers and magazines to violate the Code of Honour. In the early stages, many of its decisions were capricious and newspapers refused to publish the Council's findings.

## 21. UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

The journalists' responsibility is clearly defined in the Statutes of the Ukrainian Journalists' Association which emphasizes the importance of the journalist's contribution to the development of the country and of his contribution to strengthening the political and cultural maturity of its peoples.

In their professional activities, mass-communication specialists in the Ukrainian SSR are guided by the following fundamental principles :

a) They have a leading role in expressing the people's interests, and in making the workers aware of the present and future societies.

b) Truthfulness, making use of only exact and undeniable facts, is an essential principle of mass-communication.

c) Criticism and auto-criticism.

The general field of ethics is also covered in a manner not dissimilar to the relevant paragraphs in the Codes of most of the other socialist countries, but the Statutes embody also such of the country's penal codes as are considered to have an effect upon the principles and practices of mass communication. For example, war — propaganda is formally prohibited in Ukraine. Art. 63 of the Penal Code of the Ukrainian SSR qualifies war — propaganda as a crime against humanity and sanctions thereupon can vary from 3 to 5 years of imprisonment. Articles 125 and 126 mention criminal liability for libel or insinuation. Plagiarism is formally defended in Art.

136, just as propaganda for violence or pornography is in Art. 211. In addition, journalists are guided in their professional activities by such moral norms as collectivism, patriotism, internationalism and socialist humanism.

## 22. UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Recently, Professor Valery A. Mansurov, of the Institute of Social Research at the Academy of Science of the USSR asked : «Would not an ethic of communication be incomplete or unrealistic if it did not take into account the necessity of educating and stimulating the receiver's critical mind, by enriching his culture, thus contributing to the realization, consolidation, and full flowering of the human personality and of society ?»

As far as his own country and the rest of the CMEA (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance) countries are concerned, his question was a rhetorical one, addressed to the West. These principles of «educating and stimulating the receiver's critical mind» are already implicit in the statutes and professional codes of all communicators in the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the German Democratic Republic. They are well established as mass media practice. Moreover, since mass media communicators in these countries have for long and effectively performed a self-regulating role through their own organizations and corporately through the International Organization of Journalists, there has been no need for the media councils or Press Ombudsmen to augment the observance of the principles of the codes, as in a number of Western countries. Nor has there been need for media councils to act in the same way as in many Western countries on behalf of readers or listeners who have felt aggrieved about the way in which news items have been handled but who have failed in their own attempts to get satisfaction from the newspaper, radio or television station concerned. The link between the media in the CMEA countries and the public is much closer and much more direct.

As has already been emphasized in this study, communication is a two-way process and one in which information should be exchanged and not just communicated in a one-way flow. Communicators in the CMEA countries are enjoined in their statutes and codes to think at all times of the effect upon individuals of what they communicate, even though they use the physical attributes of mass communication in which to do so. Their role is to be understood as being the defence of the rights of the people, whether they be agricultural or industrial workers or intellectuals, against exploitation. Their role is also to allow the people self-expression through the media. Where the media have such a well-defined social function as that of educating and enriching the culture of people and uniting them and orienting them towards a real social life, there is no question of there being neutral professional ethic. It is a committed ethic.



National Union of Journalists' code was announced in 1936 and it was perfectly adequate for the conditions of the time. The newspaper industry showed a considerable degree of responsibility and there was much more straightforward and factual reporting then than now. At that time the practice was essentially to keep news and opinion separate. The main function of the Code, in its early days, was protective of journalists, rather than of the reader. It was, as its name implied, a Code of Conduct and no journalist could be forced by his employer to behave in any way which violated it.

With changes in the technique of journalism, the post-World War Two intense competition between newspapers themselves, and between newspapers corporately on the one hand and television on the other, coupled with the general change in the moral climate of the country, the Code ceased to be an effective protection for the consumer. There was an increasing dissatisfaction about the performance of the media; the media was invariably blamed (often without justification) for all sorts of social failings. There were pressures for control. Often the people responsible for the pressures were themselves ill-informed and prejudiced. In the end the British Government decided to set up a Royal Commission into the Press (1946) which reported that in many ways the Press of the United Kingdom was not nearly as irresponsible as had been made out. It did, however, suggest that it was time that the Press industry itself considered setting up some sort self-regulating machinery, and the Nordic Media Council pattern was recommended. Grudgingly the newspaper industry as a whole agreed, though once again the major initiative was taken by the National Union of Journalists. The proprietorial and editors' organizations were being somewhat more reluctant. Moreover, the Press Council, when formed (in 1953) did not go so far in its concept as the recommendations of the Royal Commission. A second Royal Commission in 1961 reminded the Press Council that it had not done so, and subsequently there were such amendments as the introduction of lay membership and a lay chairman. Both Royal Commissions said that the Press Council should produce a functioning Code of Ethics. The Press Council's attitude was, and still is, that the National Union of Journalists and the journalists' other professional organization, the Institute of Journalists, both have their Codes, and that a third one was unnecessary. It also decided that case law and the principles evolved from the study of case law were preferable within the British scene. This view has not always met with complete acceptance outside the Press Council, and there are many, both in the communications industry and outside it, who feel that whatever the advantages of case law which may come from its flexibility and its evolutionary nature, it has other serious defects. These, they say, are that case law does not provide precise guidelines for everyone; that it is only viable if everybody knows something about the particular cases upon which any principles of case law are applied;

that problems of interpretation cause delay not only in daily newspaper practice but also in adjudication of alleged infringements; that it tends to encourage a legalistic atmosphere however much the Press Council may try to avoid this (the fact that the Council has had two retired Law Lords and an eminent international jurist as chairmen in succession has lent colour to this impression); case law can be manipulated much more easily by those who wish to evade their responsibilities, than can a simple well-drafted and well-defined Code.

Because of racial tensions and the problems created for the media in treating news with racial content, the National Union of Journalists in 1976 took the initiative ahead of the Press Council and other bodies and working with the official race relations organization, the Community Relations Commission, drew up an extra set of guidelines for race relations reporting which are in addition to its original Code of Ethics (see appendix).

The British Press is, at this time, in a state of turmoil with proprietors and editors uneasily together in one camp and the National Union of Journalists in the other. The National Union of Journalists are seeking to apply what they call «the closed shop» and «chapel power». The one would control not only entry into the profession but also prevent the use of virtually any editorial material which came from any source other than from their members. The other is a variation on the theme of worker-participation and self-determination, under which the editorial staff of a newspaper would have a considerable say in their papers' editorial policies, staff arrangements, etc. The dispute has resulted in a considerable amount of industrial action leading to strikes, go-slow activity, work-to-rule, etc. Instructions to members (also in the Appendix under the heading «A Negative Code») were issued by the National Union of Journalists. The counter-argument has been that such action is unethical, since it can be claimed to be a denial of Press Freedom and unwarranted interference in the free flow of information. This debate continues in the United Kingdom, and is likely to remain unresolved for a long time to come. Attempts have been made to bring in a Charter which would be acceptable to editors, working journalists, and everyone else concerned in the communications industry. The Government told the newspaper industry that it should formulate something mutually acceptable, and set a time limit in which this should be done. The time limit expired, and in consequence the Government has said that it will now step in and impose one of its own drafting. However, it had not done so by the end of 1977. The United Kingdom Guild of Editors put forward its own idea of how the Charter should read (see Appendix), but this was not acceptable to the National Union of Journalists.

During 1977, a third Royal Commission into the Press reported and a Committee of Inquiry (not a Royal Commission) into the future of broadcasting, also reported. The Royal Commission took up the issue of the Charter and suggested to the Secretary of State that

«A journalist is a socio-political worker who, consciously committed to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, through his professional activity, publicly, by written or by oral word, caricature, photograph or film, takes part in building and developing the socialist self-management society and fights for the full attainment of the leading role of the working class, the rights of all working people directly to decide on all conditions of their work and life, for human relations among men, for the unity of socialist Yugoslavia and the equalities of its nations and nationalities. Thus he contributes to the shaping and elevating of socialist consciousness, forming and reinforcing socialist public opinion on all social phenomena and on concrete policy in various spheres of social life, to enable direct reproducers competently to take part in the passing of decisions on social matters».

The Code's preambular goes on to state that the press, radio and television function from the «self-management socialist orientation of social development» and that true freedom of work depends on a conscious adoption, clear ideological and political comprehension and creative interpretation and implementation of adopted social objectives.

The Code condemns as serious violations «conformist glossing over of reality or nihilistic pictures of life and work in uniform bleak lines; open attacks on and perfidious undermining of the brotherhood of nations and the unity of our country; undermining the free circulation of information and abusing this freedom; absolute adherence to individual figures, their views and ambitions; blind submission to centres of economic and political power; editorial and non-editorial attempts to privatize the means of mass communication; machiavellian interpretation of ethical norms refracted exclusively through the prism of partial interests; losing sight of whole processes and trends; political sensationalism and an over-exaggerated market orientation; unequal treatment of various environments in approach and tone — categorization into small and large; insensitivity to the problems of others; complete preoccupation with oneself and one's own narrow interests; superficial or biased selection of news or quotations; verbiage as a widespread evil of political life; calculated ambiguity in words and deeds; evasion of publishing corrections disadvantageous to journalists or when publishing them aiming at transforming the public word into private monopoly and thus maintaining a superior position».

The Codes deals in considerable detail with a great many fundamentals of communication and the day-to-day practicalities of news coverage. It has clauses such as:

«Articles and broadcasts dealing with sexual problems, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, etc. shall avoid vulgarity, exaggeration, mockery...»

«Morally deformed or criminal acts shall not be presented in such a way as to imply that they are normal in society and do not merit firm condemnation...»

«The journalist uses special discretion in publishing information about grave illnesses of individuals...»

«The journalist avoids publication of names, initials or photographs of individuals when it is not necessary for the given piece of information...»

«The journalist does not stress race or nationality or profession or creed of the person he is writing about, especially in the case of those arrested or condemned if it is not essential and of importance to the case in question...»

«The journalist does not publicly identify persons suspected of a crime or arrested, before they have appeared in court on a formal accusation...»

Observance of the Code is mandatory upon all engaged in mass communication. There are also Courts of Honour to consider any alleged infringements. Recently, however, the Association of Journalists in Yugoslavia felt that all the Courts of Honour were not applying the Code consistently. They also said that «The complexity of this present phase of development of Yugoslav society makes ever more essential the observance of the ethical obligations among journalists. The Association asks its members to join in the struggle to eliminate abuses concerning commercial advertising and to promote continuing respect for the integrity and dignity of persons engaged in the profession of the mass media of communication».

## B — NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

### 1. CANADA

Canada is an interesting country to study in the context of Codes of Ethics and Media Councils. It is a large country, with great distances to traverse and vast extremes in ways of life and social awareness. We start off with a country which has a problem in integration into a national pattern; a highly developed but regional mass communications network. Added to this there is the English-French equation. Parts of Canada align to the United Kingdom, use English as their language and tend to follow the English pattern of life. Other areas are still predominantly French in language and in the way of life which is that of France. In few other countries where the mass communications media are as well-developed and as sophisticated as they are in Canada, are there quite such differences.

Canada has four Press Councils and several national Codes of Ethics for the broadcasting media, but not, as yet, any Code for print journalism. The Senate Committee of the Canadian Government in 1970 urged an overall National Press Council for Canada which would also draw up and administer a National Press Code, but this idea did not find favour.



French-Canadian wording is much more explicit. The Charter is not mandatory, however, nor is it backed by any court with penal powers. The Quebec Press Council does have the power to issue annually identification cards to journalists and the power to withhold such cards as an ultimate sanction if the need ever arose. The value of Press identification cards varies from country to country. In some they are no more than their name implies, just an indication that the holder practices as a journalist, without there being any assessment of his or her ability, training or sense of professional responsibility. In other countries, such cards are only issued to *bona-fide* journalists, whose journalistic history, ability and sense of responsibility have been well tested. In such countries the withholding or cancellation of such a pass can usually mean the end of that person's journalistic career, because no one will employ or work with him and also because many official information sources are closed to non-holders.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters, which was formed as long ago as 1926, is one of the more senior organizations of its kind in the world, not merely because of its age and experience but because of the significant part which independent radio plays in the Canadian way of life. Because of Canada's large size and relatively small population compared with that size, and because of a number of infrastructure communication problems posed by natural barriers, radio has been developed in Canada to a remarkable degree.

Station membership of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters is an important privilege. Membership is open to any independent station licensed by the government, but not to those stations owned by the government itself. Infringement of its Code of Ethics, if a complaint against a station is upheld, can lead to loss of the Certificate of Membership, which in its turn can have important adverse commercial repercussions. It becomes, therefore, important in commercial terms for stations to show their sense of responsibility. This is different from the position in countries where there are no such sanctions and where, in search of profit or economic viability, every canon of decency and responsibility is violated !

The preamble of the Association is interesting and it sets the tone of the national structure :-

«The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to document the realization by proprietors and managers of Broadcasting Stations that, as an integral part in the media of communications of this nation, their first responsibility is to the radio listeners and television viewers of Canada for the dissemination of information and news, the supply of entertainment varied to meet the various tastes of listeners, and the necessity for ethical business standards in dealing with advertisers and their agencies.

«It is recognized that the most valuable asset of a broadcaster is public respect which must be earned and can be maintained only by adherence to the highest possible standards of public service and integrity.

«The electronics form of publication known as private commercial broadcasting is a highly competitive business devoted to the provision of service to the public in all its interests — business, political, recreational, informational, cultural and educational — for profit.

«Revenues from advertising make possible non-governmental broadcasting and make available to the Canadian people all the programmes of information, education and entertainment. Each broadcaster is responsible for the programming of his station. He can carry out this responsibility only by bringing his influence to bear upon all who have a hand in the production of programmes, including networks, sponsors, producers of live and recorded programmes, advertising agencies and talent agencies...»

The Code goes on to deal in considerable detail with the principles which shall be followed in general programming, in childrens' programmes, in community activities, in education news, controversial public issues, advertising, religion, etc.

The Broadcasters have a Code of Ethics Committee who issue certificates of membership, consider complaints and watch the conscience of the industry generally. They also have appeal machinery, which is rarely found in any of the Ethical Codes studied (see United Kingdom).

In addition there is a Radio Television News Directors' Association of Canada which in September 1970, adopted a Code which has specific application to news ethics only. It is commendably brief and to the point, and it is included in the Appendix of Codes.

## 2. CARIBBEAN

When the need for a media council was first felt in the Islands of the Caribbean, the Publishers and Broadcasters Association of the area turned to the United Kingdom Press Council for help. In consequence a system which is not unlike that of the United Kingdom Press Council has evolved, but because conditions are so very different among the Islands, it has marked contrasts with its UK model. The Council is a voluntary self-disciplinary body, but its difficulties lie in the fact that, unlike Western Europe, the relative development of the various forms of the media is very wide. Some newspapers and broadcasting systems are highly advanced ; others are quite primitive. Moreover infrastructure communications are neither easy nor cheap. In many instances, though the geographical distance between two Islands may appear to be small, encompassing it is far from easy.

The Council has members from Trinidad, Tobago, Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica.

Their terms of reference have been listed as :-

- a. To create a climate throughout the Caribbean in which the Press can operate freely, without government or other external control.

social function. As the freedom of the press is presented as the cornerstone of democracy, one could not better express the interaction of the one with the other.

According to the code, journalists should not be the victims of hostile manoeuvres or pursuits while carrying out their job.

Within the framework of their duties and fundamental rights as journalists, the Colombian Code focusses on the fact that they are not only serving the cause of truth, etc. but also the ideals of social progress and friendship between peoples. They are under an obligation to fight against all hostility to the freedom of the press and to lend full assistance to all brothers who are unjustly persecuted.

The benefits of the conscience clause, to be obtained from the journalist's enterprise, should be recognized by the employment contract which ties them, and the journalist should not tolerate any coercion whatsoever from his enterprise which would be prejudicial to the truth which it is his job to serve.

One clause of the Colombian Code lays out that not only should the journalist condemn and fight against racial, national, religious or political discrimination, but he should always look out for popular democratic rights.

Finally, one particularly strict rule prohibits the solicitation or acceptance of gifts for himself or his brother journalists, whatever the motive of the gift.

## 5. CUBA

The Union of Journalists of Cuba (UPEC) is an organization, as stated in its first Article, which has as its main objective to contribute to the political, ideological, cultural and technical development of Cuban journalists. It has 2,593 members, over 50,000 voluntary correspondents and 300 associate contributors.

Their aims are (art. 3) *inter alia* :

- To strive for the development of the press as an instrument acting in support of the building of socialism and communism, in defence of the country, in support of the struggles of the peoples of the world against imperialism, in support of international solidarity, and for world peace ; all this on the basis of disseminating truth ;
- To contribute to the cultural, technical and professional developments of Cuban journalists ;
- To strengthen relations with other socialist countries ;
- To participate in the solution of professional problems of Cuban journalists.

Membership shall be extended to all those who act in favour and defend the principles of Cuban society in all its aspects ; ..., all those whose actions are based on socialist moral and ethical principles (art. 9). To maintain those principles is, obviously, one of the duties of a revolutionary journalist (art. 12). The Press Committee

can, according to art. 13, impose sanctions in cases of unwarranted or unjustified breach of Union discipline, of systematic non-implementation of the inherent obligations which follow from membership in the organization, as well as of attitudes which compromise the dignity of a journalist.

## 6. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

It is probably safe to say that more words have been «spilt» about the Freedom of the Press and about the ethics of communication in the USA than anywhere else in the world. It has almost become a national hobby, as an eminent Professor of Journalism at a USA University once said. Practically every University has its journalism faculty ; the books ; magazines and articles devoted to one or another aspect of the media of mass communication would fill a large library. The Codes are numerous. Like Australia, where the same multiplicity exists, the journalists, the editors, the newspaper proprietors, radio and television workers, script writers, advertising people, motion picture people and a few more who are on the fringes of mass communication, all have their special Codes. It is a moot point however how many of them are worth anything more in practice than the paper upon which they are written. The Codes of the American Society of Newspaper Editor (1923), of the Journalists Association Sigma Delta Chi (1973), which are the most prestigious, are given in the Appendix.

There are in the Codes of radio and television practitioners some additional requirements regarding programme standards, which are of interest. These include protecting the audience from deceptive programme standards ; the prohibition of «profanity, obscenity, smut and vulgarity» ; strong guidelines to prevent racial discrimination or the creation of racial stereotypes ; the request that «care should be exercised so that cigarette smoking will not be depicted in a manner to impress the youth of our country as a desirable habit worthy of imitation» ; and the very unusual one : «The creation of a state of hypnosis by act or demonstration on the air is prohibited and hypnosis as an aspect of «parlour game» antics to create humorous situations within a comedy setting cannot be used.»

Both the professional organizations for the broadcasting media accept that «Standards for broadcasting can never be final or complete. Broadcasting is a creative art and it must always seek new ways to achieve greater advances. Therefore any standards must be subject to change... Through this process of self-examination broadcasters acknowledge their obligation to the American family».

Both radio and television in the United States accept that they have a strong educational role. The television Code in particular states : «In order that television programming may best serve the public interest, viewers should be encouraged to make their criticisms and

- The journalist will not accept coercion from his employers to alter the truth and he is obliged to denounce any acts of coercion, groups or people who would prejudice or violate these norms.
- The journalist cannot, for any reason, receive any sort of remuneration from a public or private entity that he is serving professionally, if this has an effect on professional morale.
- The journalist must rectify mistaken information after confirmation of the error committed and provide the means for the right to reply or re-establish the persons or institutions concerned.
- The journalist must respect professional secrets.
- The journalist cannot divulge information on private lives, other than those having importance for the interests of the community.
- In no case should he pander to sensationalism or superficiality.

## C – ASIA AND OCEANIA

### 1. AUSTRALIA

Australia is one of those countries of which it is possible to say that it is «over-policed» by Codes of Ethics. Too many Codes of Ethics may well be just as bad as too few. This is especially so if the majority of those Codes come from within the industry, and are administered from within, with little or no lay participation and with a certain amount of mutual hostility and incompatibility. They can become far too introspective. The lay complainant can often be so bewildered about where and how to seek redress, that he ends up by doing nothing, suffering consequential frustration.

Because of Australia's size, her speedy development and the technical sophistication of her communications structure, the continent has a multiplicity of professional and commercial organizations connected with various aspects of the media of communications, matched only by the United States of America.

Each media organization seems to have drawn up and adopted to administer its own Code of Practice. Some of these organizations are more professionally oriented than others which are openly commercial so that their Codes deal with rates of payment, contracts and the principles of business transactions, with little more than a passing reference to any higher ethical responsibility to the public at large.

This predominant self-interest, combined with the lack of lay participation and lay understanding, has led during recent years to strong external demands for an Australian Press Council. Opposition to the idea from within the industry has been violent, but in the end such a Council has now been set up.

The initiative for the formation of the Australian Press Council came from the Australian Government. In 1975, the then Minister for the Media (the Hon. Dr. Moss Cass) invited proprietors to discuss with him ideas borrowed from the United Kingdom.

His proposals were for a body with 21 members, seven nominated by the main newspapers; three by the Australian Journalists' Association (of which more anon) and ten from the public appointed by the Chairman (himself to be a lay-man) from trades unions, consumer associations, the Law Council and the Council for Civil Liberties.

The headspring of all the Codes of Ethics, Charters of Practice, ect. set up within the industry in Australia can fairly be taken as the Code of Ethics of the Australian Journalists Association. From it have grown other Codes drawn up to meet the specific needs of separate and specialist classes of journalists (news broadcasters, radio and television script writers, producers, etc.) which could not have been anticipated at the time the original was created. Though these organizations recognize the over-riding authority of the Australian Journalists Code, it is arguable that it might have been better to amplify and up-date the first and original Code to meet new needs as the communications industry itself developed and evolved, rather than that each section should have its own. Many of the points covered in each one are but duplicates of points covered by the others, though the phraseology may be different. Such changes can also lead to confusion or at best give cause for arguments about interpretation. None of the Codes has developed in any remarkable or original form; they are all derivative. Though the different Codes vary in their approach to what might be called the mechanical presentation of news, none takes into account latter-day changes in the philosophy of news-gathering or dissemination, nor of change in public opinion about what is considered acceptable and what is not. All the Codes show their years and by now are little more than guidelines. If there is any moral or lesson to be drawn it is that like a language, an Ethical Code must be a living and an evolving thing. It cannot be static. Secondly, what happened in Australia seems to go to show that the existence of a multiplicity of voluntary Codes, however admirable each one may be of itself, is no guarantee that they will achieve what they set out to accomplish.

The Australian Journalists Code (see Appendix) has often been criticized because its terms are too general and too imprecise to enable anyone to define exactly what constitutes mal-practice. It does, however, have one merit over most others, its procedures for dealing with complaints alleging its violation, and the final punishments for anyone found guilty of violation are quite definite, albeit very seldom applied. It does not allow for lay representation on the body dealing with complaints.

instructing and guiding the population, and therefore there is neither room nor need for many of the clauses found in western-style Codes of Ethics. However, there remains need for agreement between the journalists' organization and the government on matters of employment and security of employment. These are matters which are still under discussion.

### 3. BURMA

Burma was the first of many countries to elaborate a Code of Ethics and to create a Press Council. The Code of Press Ethics contains the following principles :

1. The Press will do all in their power to ensure that the information imparted by them to the public is factually accurate. They will check before publishing all items of information to the best of their ability. No facts are to be wilfully distorted or essential facts deliberately suppressed.

2. The right of the individual for protection of his reputation and integrity shall be respected. Publicity that violates the sanctity of privacy shall be avoided, unless it is deemed necessary in the interest of the public.

3. If and when an inaccurate or false piece of information is published, the paper concerned shall correct it at the earliest opportunity, giving the correction due prominence on the same page as the earlier incorrect information.

4. News reports shall be strictly separated from opinion. The opinion of a writer may only be included in the news story when it carries his by-line.

5. Discretion must be observed concerning sources of information. Professional secrecy must also be observed in all matters revealed in confidence.

6. In reporting crime stories it must be solemnly observed that the accused is innocent until he is found guilty by a competent court of law.

7. The personnel of the Press must never accept any form of bribe or permit personal interest to influence their sense of justice and impartiality.

8. Newspapers shall not deliberately or calculatedly incite religious or racial hatred or subject any race, religion, or nationality to unjust criticism.

9. Nothing shall be published that will endanger the security, stability, and sovereignty of the Union.

10. Commercial announcements or advertisements in the form of news articles, pictures, and features must be published in such a way as to leave no doubt that they are commercial announcements or advertisements.

11. The following are to be avoided in any form of publication, such as, articles, news items, or photographs, etc.,

- (a) Immorality or obscenity ; (b) Use of vulgar expressions ; (c) Malicious imputations ; and (d) False and defamatory statements.

### 4. HONG KONG

In Hong Kong there are virtually no restrictions on what is published and equally virtually no protection for journalists nor for readers. The Hong Kong Journalists' Association has for some time been concerned at the position and particularly at the low level of professionalism and the malpractices of so many self-styled journalists. There is no Media Council in Hong Kong, but the Journalists' Association is affiliated to the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists ; the Australian Journalists' Association ; the New Zealand Journalists' Union ; and the Newspaper Guild in North America. It has recruited some 600 members and drawn up a Code of Ethics which it frankly regards as only the starting point. The Code borrows much from the Australian Journalists' Association's Code.

The Manila-based Press Foundation of Asia (see the Philippines) has recently moved into the Hong Kong scene, chiefly because Hong Kong, despite many of its deficiencies, is a major «listening post» for that part of the globe. It shares with Singapore the role of the Far East operational centre of most international magazines, news agencies, etc. Commercial radio and commercial television interests are particularly strong in Hong Kong, and here too there is ample scope for improvement in general ethical standards.

### 5. INDIA

At the time of compilation (late 1977) the position in India regarding the India Press Council and the legal status and application of various professional Codes is uncertain. Mass communicators in India are actively engaged in the restoration and re-application of free communication principles which were in operation before the State of Emergency led to a number of restrictions and changes.

It is possible, however, to look back into the history of mass communication in India and to say that India was the one country where the ethical and general philosophy of mass communication was the most highly developed and sophisticated in the developing Third World.

Various Press and broadcasting organizations and institutes, a flourishing Press Council and schools of journalism and academic studies of the media in universities had a strong effect upon the way in which mass communication media functioned. There were many declarations about the professional duties and responsibilities of media communicators, and one of the more significant was that of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists made in Ahmedabad in 1971 :

«We the working journalists of India, declare that the objectives of the profession of journalism are closely related to the wider social objectives to which the nation is pledged. These objectives include the achievement of

violates the Code, a warning is sent to the newspaper concerned. If the newspaper does not heed the warning, it is then referred to the Directors of Nihon Shinbun Kyokai.

A great deal of research and study into the ethical side of mass media operations is also undertaken by this organization, which has a separate study group operating in this field.

Surprisingly the Canons of Journalism, which come under six heads — sphere of news reporting and editorial writing ; the principle of editorial comment ; impartiality ; tolerance and decency ; guidance ; responsibility and pride, are not in themselves excessively long (see Appendix).

There are several sub-clauses which are models in themselves, e.g.

Sphere of news reporting etc. sub clause 3 : «In treating news one should always remember and be strictly on guard against the possibility of such news being used for propaganda purposes»

Sub Clause 4 : «Criticism of persons should be limited to such as that which could be made direct in the face of the persons involved» .

In outlining the principles which should govern editorial comment, it is stated :

«the writer should maintain the public spirit of being a speaker for those who otherwise have no means of voicing their opinions» .

There is, of course, the right of correction and the obligation that «those who are to be criticised should be given the opportunity to defend themselves» .

On responsibility there is the statement :

«The principal difference between newspapers and other commercial enterprises is that newspapers in their reportorial and editorial activities exercise great influence over the public. The public chiefly depends on newspapers as the source of information and the basis of their judgement of public events and problems. From this distinction arises the public character of journalistic enterprises and the special social status of journalists. The realization of their responsibility and pride by journalists is fundamental in ensuring their special status. These are points which must be observed by each individual journalist» .

## 8. REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Korea has had a Press Ethics Commission since the early 1960's but in its first few years it confined itself to acting upon complaints raised by those whose interests or prestige were harmed by newspaper articles.

This was broadened in 1964, to consider any complaints against anything carried by newspapers or news agencies, whether brought by individuals or by the Deliberative Office which had by then been set up to study the performance of the Press and news agencies in this context.

The move to set up the Press Commission came, in the first place, from the newspaper industry and it followed the guidelines of the International Press Institute of Zurich.

The Code of Ethics divides into four main parts, and it adopts mainstream thinking for such codes.

The first part deals with reporting and comment and the necessity to keep separated fact from opinion, and ensures that newspapers, when they have published false information, shall «correct it immediately, voluntarily and completely» which is a neat and unequivocal statement.

Under the heading of «Independence», there are a couple of clauses of interest, one of which reads :

«News items which might be detrimental to the healthy development of society should not played-up in order to satisfy the curiosity of the public. In particular public morals should not be depraved by exaggerated reporting of obscenity and other immoralities» .

The other deals with the prohibition of inciting religious hatreds and goes on to say :

«... And no race or nationality should be subject to unjust insult or criticism by newspapers. In particular, the honour of Heads of State, either of our own nation or of foreign ones, should be respected» .

The section which deals with the manner in which newspapers shall regard personal honour, etc. is also worthy of note :

«The inclusion in articles of vulgar expressions or of unjustified attacks against holders of public office or against institutions and groups is prohibited» .

«... public interest and public curiosity must be clearly distinguished» .

«Names and pictures of juvenile suspects, juvenile defendants or assaulted women, should not be published» .

And there is a clause which is worthy of being given in full, the first portion of which in some countries might cause considerable opposition, though the second half is exemplary. The mandate in the first part of the clause could conflict with the assumption that provided views and opinions are clearly credited, newspapers etc. are entitled to a degree of bias. How much space should, for instance, a Roman Catholic newspaper give to Protestant views and opinions ; or a strongly Right Wing political newspaper give to the views etc. of the extreme Left. The clause reads :

«For the protection of personal freedom, newspapers must carry views and opinions which may be contradictory with those of the newspaper itself. Space must be given to any person who has been criticized, for his defence» .

It may well be some time before the relationship between the Pakistan Journalists Federation and the Pakistan Islamic Republic settles down to a workable norm and a mutually agreed Ethical Code and set of guidelines are formulated.

## 12. PHILIPPINES

There have been several Presidential Decrees regarding the media, and in May 1973 the Government set up a Media Advisory Council, which replaces all previous similar bodies.

It started off by averring that «it is the objective of the Government to help in the sound development of the mass media to the end that they will become an effective instrument in the attainment of social change».

The document setting up the Advisory Council went on to say that the mass media had, in 1972, (the previous year) admitted its inability to institute a self-regulatory system to prevent corruption and abuse. But then it appeared that the time was «opportune» for there to be a Media Advisory Council which could recommend applications for newspaper, magazine or broadcasting networks and which could take over the functions of the defunct Philippine Press Council.

Many of the Advisory Council's functions were not, however, to be vastly dissimilar from those of its predecessor, particularly its guidelines about the dissemination of government information. The passing on to readers, listeners and viewers of information about agricultural production, consumer price indices and general government news in themselves can be matters which it is not unseemly for a country under stress to require of its media. Of more concern is the manner in which it may be enforced.

## 13. SINGAPORE

There is no overall Media Council and no overall Code of Ethics, but the Singapore National Union of Journalists follows very broadly the guidelines of the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists. The newspapers have not, until recently, been subject to any form of strict control, but latterly a number of excesses and a critical line towards the administration of the Republic have led to some stringent measures being taken to make the newspaper industry, particularly the Chinese and the English language Press, be more conformist.

## 14. SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is in many ways a microcosm of the whole of the Indian sub-Continent. Until a few years ago the Press and Press Freedom standards in Sri Lanka were among the highest in Asia, and on a par with those of India.

At the beginning of 1973, the Government passed a Press Council Law and set up a Press Council of its own, which in effect is a two edged weapon. It is something which can be used for the Press and also turned against it. And the latter has been the use to which the Sri Lanka Press Council has been most frequently put.

The Bill states that the objects of the Press Council shall be :

1. To ensure the freedom of the Press in accordance with the highest professional standards.
2. To ensure that newspapers shall be free to publish as news, true statements of fact, and any comments based upon true statements of facts.
3. To ensure the maintenance by newspapers and journalists of high standards of journalistic ethics and a due sense of both the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
4. To advise the government on any matters pertaining to the regulation and conduct of newspapers.»

Membership of the Press Council is at the direction of the government and when spelled out in detail it is clear that one of its functions shall be «to prevent the publication or discussion, not only of official secrets, but also of matters relating to the discussions and decisions of the Sri Lanka Cabinet, without the approval of the Secretary to the Cabinet».

## D – AFRICA AND ARAB STATES

### 1. ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Egypt not only has a sophisticated set of Codes of Honour to cover newspapers, journals and broadcasting, but its disciplinary machinery is also strict. It includes suspension ; and if a journalist attempts to work while suspended, his name can be removed from the professional register entirely. He will then have to seek work outside the media complex. As media work in Egypt is well-paid, this could be a real economic hardship.

Though Egypt is a Muslim country the Codes stress the importance of religious freedom and tolerance. This is particularly emphasized in the Charter of Honour of the Radio and TV Union. Neither on radio nor TV must anything be done which would devalue the national heroes, alive or dead ; nor anything which could destroy national ideals. For instance, one of the less usual prohibitions to find in any Code or set of guidelines is that against the advocacy of divorce as a solution to family problems. The Codes throughout are strongly idealistic and nationalistic.

«Elimination of all obstacles and restrictions barring journalists from access to external sources of information, by making these sources available and removing, for the benefit of journalists, the censorship imposed on foreign newspapers and periodicals».

## 2. MALI

Mali is one of the first African countries to have adopted professional ethical norms from the beginning of their access to independence. In effect, it was by a decree published in August 1961 that the Statute of Journalism was adopted in Mali. The principles of professional ethics are formulated in the preamble of this decree as follows :

«Whereas the journalists of the Republic of Mali :

- take responsibility for all they write ;
- count as serious professional fault all calumny, accusations without proof, alteration of documents, deformation of facts and lies ;
- only recognize the authority of their sovereign peers in the way of professional honour ;
- only accept missions compatible with their professional dignity ;
- do not give themselves imaginary titles or qualities, or use unfair means to obtain information or take somebody by surprise ;
- do not accept money from a public service or enterprise where their quality of journalist, their influence or relations are open to exploitation ;
- do not accept any form of corruption.

«Whereas Mali journalists accept :

- not to put their names to commercial or financial articles ;
- not to commit any plagiarism ;
- to cite their fellows when they copy a text ;
- not to displace a colleague or provoke his dismissal by offering to work under inferior conditions ;
- to guard professional secrecy ;
- not to use freedom of the press in an interested manner.

«Whereas Mali journalists :

- revindicate freedom to publish information ;
- hold as priority rules scrupulousness and a sense of justice ;
- respect democratic principles of objectivity and freedom of expression ; also the duty of impartial information ;
- respect religious, political or philosophic convictions of the public which they are addressing.»

## 3. NIGERIA

The Fifth National Convention of the Nigerian National Union of Journalists, which met in Benin in 1970, adopted a Code the first item of which is :

«It is the primary duty of a journalist to tell and adore the truth».

There are also the following :

«The profession demands good appearance at all occasions. Therefore a journalist must always be properly and decently dressed».

«It shall be improper for a journalist to ridicule or treat a fellow journalist with contempt, be he a superior or a subordinate professional colleague».

«A bona fide journalist should not fraternize with fakes. Anyone who knows any of the fakes and does not expose him is guilty of professional misconduct».

The Nigerian Editors have a separate set of guidelines which are state-security oriented :

«We believe that the Press should refrain from publishing anything likely to undermine the loyalty and allegiance of any member of the Armed Forces».

«We believe that the Press should avoid the publication of news, comments, photographs or advertisements which tend to undermine the security of the state and the solidarity of the nation».

«We believe it is the duty of journalists to promote national unity ; to avoid news items or pictures capable of inciting one tribe against the other or of inciting religious hatreds or conflicts or making any section of the Nigerian community feel that they are second class citizens. News items calculated to promote peace and harmony and help in the maintenance of law and order should be given prominence and precedence over other news items».

«We believe that all editorial comments and expressions of opinion should be restrained and be free from scurrilous attacks against leaders of the community, and there should be no incitement to violence».

## 4. TANZANIA

In Tanzania, President Nyerere has appointed a Mass Media Committee which advises the ruling party on media matters and also issues guidelines to government-owned newspapers and radio. The newspapers, such as the capital city's 'Daily News' and 'Sunday News' are expected to run on a commercial basis as they did until they were nationalized in 1970.

A Charter issued in 1970 acts as a guideline for the managing editor and the Mass Media Committee.

## 5. TUNISIA

The preamble of the Tunisian draft Code of Ethics, elaborated in 1977, starts off :

«The mission of a journalist is to serve. This term does not imply for him any idea of servitude, but



interests of the sponsors. That a programme is being sponsored should be the subject of a factual announcement to that effect, and nothing else.

## 2. DRAFT CODE TWO :

For working journalists, practising broadcasters and others, directly concerned with the gathering, writing, presentation and processing of news and opinion.

1. Recognition of the importance of striving always after truth, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
2. Avoiding the suppression of essential facts, particularly if in so doing the news is distorted or falsified or the opinion is deliberately misleading.
3. Respecting confidences and the guarding of sources of information, particularly when disclosure can put others at risk. But not using this to disguise the fact that sources of information are in fact non-existent, unreliable, inadequate or in other ways suspect. The respect of confidences and the guarding of sources of information places upon the communicator a special obligation to ensure that those sources do of themselves fulfill clause 1, i.e. the recognition of the importance of striving always after truth, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
4. Refusing to allow personal prejudices, personal interests (especially financial ones), to influence news presentation by inclusion, rejection or change of emphasis.
5. Refusing to accept gifts or bribes to influence the news.
6. Using only fair and honest methods to obtain information.
7. Disclosing identity as a newsman before obtaining information for subsequent publication in any form whatsoever.
8. Remembering that a journalist or broadcaster is a citizen of his country. His loyalty must therefore be to his country and he should not for monetary nor for ideological reasons use his position to undermine the authority of his own country.
9. Refusing to do anything directly or indirectly unfairly to deprive a colleague of the means of livelihood. While recognizing that there is no copyright in news, there should be no plagiarism.
10. Refusing where someone belongs to an ethnic, religious or any other minority group, to mention this fact in any harmful or pejorative sense, and only to use it, if it is an essential part of the news or opinion item concerned. Refusing to write or broadcast anything which is likely to create or increase racial, religious or minority group tension or intolerance. Refusing to bring the names of relatives (particularly if they occupy public positions) arbitrarily into news stories about people in trouble, just to add «colour» to a story.

## 3. DRAFT CODE THREE

For Editors, Broadcast Programme Directors, and others who are directly and legally responsible for what is published or broadcast.

1. Ensuring that every effort is made by those under their authority to provide for publication or broadcast only information which is factually accurate ; not wilfully distorted ; from which no essential facts have been suppressed. If necessary, withholding from hasty or immediate publication any item made up of half-facts, half-truths or material of doubtful authenticity, if adequate checking cannot be carried out in time.
2. Protecting the right of the individual to his good character and reputation and observing the fundamental rule that there must be an assumption of innocence until guilt is clearly proven ; respecting an individual's right of privacy in the terms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
3. Correcting immediately errors which have been made when the true facts are verifiable, and affording the right of reply (see France and «Le Droit de Réponse»).
4. Maintaining a clear identification always between news in the factual sense, and in opinion. The latter should always be credited to the person whose opinion it is. Furthermore, a clear distinction should always be maintained between what is news and opinion on the one hand and what is paid-for advertising on the other, including editorial-style advertising material.
5. Ensuring that when reporting controversial matters adequate opportunity is given to all sides for the expression of opinion.
6. Making sure that staff under their control are not required to engage upon personally humiliating assignments ; nor indirectly encouraging other persons (not in their employ) to engage in such practices by purchasing material so produced or in any way creating a market for such activity.
7. Refusing to practise what is known as «cheque-book journalism», i.e. the payment, often of large sums of money, to convicted criminals and others for their memoirs or for articles glamourising crime and the profits arising from wrong-doing.
8. Making sure that staff do not break embargoes properly entered upon and that staff are not required to use and attribute off-the-record briefings against their will.
9. Honouring any training obligations for staff which may be part of the contract of employment or a generally accepted part of the industry's structure. Accepting the broad principle of prior consultation with the staff on matters involving change of policy which relate to their work or terms of employment, and respecting whatever form of consultative machinery



PART TWO

## MASS MEDIA COUNCILS

### Section one : Mass Media Councils in Third World Countries

Information is one of the main tools of development. It is, moreover, a tool with many uses, and like most other things in this world it is capable of being well-used or ill-used.

In considering information to be as important a development aid as food, health and shelter, it is well to recall right at the start of this study, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads :

«Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers».

Because of the rapid advances in the techniques of communication, information knows few frontiers, and it has taken on a universality undreamed of at the beginning of this century.

It is this very universality, desirable in itself because we are all of one race, which has brought its own problems. Those problems are felt particularly strongly within the Third World. Not the least of them is that of the quality of information. Communication of information, especially through the agency of the mass media, should never be left to chance. It is not something which just happens. It is not, and should not, be regarded as the monopoly of any section of the community whether the group be national, ethnic, religious, ideological, political or economic.

Communicators need a *raison d'être*. They need to hold before them always the fact that they are by the nature of their occupation helping to shape and to condition the minds of others. This is a responsibility and a trust which cannot be ignored. There has been a tendency to elevate what is often described as the impartiality of the news media to a higher and more authoritative role than is shown by examination of how this impartiality factor actually works in practice. Another concept which is often invoked by practitioners

in the field of mass communications is that of objectivity. The claims made for it seldom stand up to detailed analysis.

To return for a moment to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration and its opening sentence : «Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression», we must remember that the very «opinion» to which every man has the right to freely express, can only be formed on the basis of information. Although it is not the only way, the most important channel in the Third World through which opinion can be formed and expressed, is that of the mass media.

But it would be wrong to place over-emphasis in the Third World on terms such as freedom of the press, impartiality, objectivity and free flow of information, in relation to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration. These are words used and as often misused emotively by the mass communications media in the developed world. In the first place there is no such thing as freedom of the press, at least not in terms of absolute freedom. If the restrictions on the practice of mass communication are not political they are legal, or economic, or social, etc. They vary, but it is dishonest to deny that they exist. Similarly, the use of the term «objectivity» and «impartiality» in respect of the substance of the information communicated by the media does not, as already mentioned, bear too close an examination. The terms are often used by those who are in favour of the theory of the media's non-answerability for the effect of their actions upon the minds of those to whom they make communication. And there is a growing volume of thought which regards the concept of «the free flow of information» as outdated and as belonging to the nineteenth century. The Third World in particular, feels that the words «free flow» have little meaning for them when they take stock of the imbalance in the flow of information and the control exercised by the few powerful nations and international news organizations. The mass media of the developed countries have for long sheltered behind such terms in order to avoid having to consider

conduct or codes of ethics they have all had certain fundamental principles in common. The first has been that information is sacred, that there must be accuracy and that there must not be wilful distortion nor suppression. Second has been the importance of distinguishing between information and comment or opinion. Third has been that comment should be constructive and should try to serve the public interest and that where it is critical it should avoid calumny. All codes also have a clause enjoining the maintenance of professional secrecy and the respecting of confidences.

The demand for freedom of information is not new. It has been a recurrent theme down the ages and it is now enshrined as a Human Right. But within the last few years, there has been a growing feeling, spontaneously expressed the world over, that this freedom, unless used responsibly, conflicts with other rights, the infringement of which is not in harmony with maintaining the concept of the dignity of man. Article 12 of the same declaration which covers infringement of privacy, attacks upon honour and reputation, is a case in point. Article 12 says «everyone has the right of protection of the law against such interference and attack». But the law is often cumbersome, tedious and even inadequate when dealing with some forms of infringement under Article 12. This is particularly true of infringements by the popular sections of the mass media, especially when they can turn to Article 19 and plead justification. It has been said that these two articles in the Declaration are irreconcilable. This is not so, but communicators do need to exercise a sense of caution and responsibility whenever their activities might infringe Article 12.

The most generally accepted way of ensuring the fulfilment of this sense of responsibility has been by the establishment of Courts of Honour, Codes of Ethics and Media Councils. And most frequently they have been established by the media themselves and have been self regulatory and voluntarily accepted without the necessity for legal sanctions. Nonetheless, this has not prevented some countries from arresting and imprisoning communicators with or without trial, though this has more usually been for offences, real or alleged, against the authority of the government, than for any lack of responsibility in dealing with the affairs of private individuals.

Initially the growth in the number of media councils was slow. There was considerable reluctance to introduce any self-regulatory machinery and where media councils or courts of honour were set up it was in many instances self-defensive. A few years ago the position at the time was aptly summed up in an editorial in the United States magazine *The Editor and Publisher* which observed : «Newspaper editors and publishers will never stand in the way of organizing such councils, but very few will be prime movers in setting them up !». The history of the early councils shows this to have been true. They were a self-defence against pressures which came from two directions at once. In many countries there was

extensive lobbying from the working journalists and broadcasters. Both the International Organization of Journalists and the International Federation of Journalists have done their utmost in this direction, stressing the importance of the status of journalists and broadcasters ; their inherent personal responsibility in the information they were communicating ; and their need to be protected from pressures of all kinds, external and internal, which seek to force them to act against the dictates of their consciences.

Recently, the defensive and supportive role of media councils has been more freely recognized by media people, and this has led to greater acceptance of the idea of such councils and steps being taken to create more. It is therefore likely that in the next decade the number of media councils will increase considerably throughout the world and it is important that Third World countries should share in this growth. Some of the roles which were fulfilled in the early days of media councils are less applicable to those in Third World countries than to those in developed countries, but enough has been said in the foregoing brief outline of the history of such media councils to show that some of their functions are transferable or adaptable to Third World situations. It may be some time, for instance, before in the Third World there is need for the sort of complaints mechanism which entitled the ordinary reader of a newspaper who felt aggrieved with its performance, usually in terms of reportage of his own affairs, to seek redress which he could not otherwise obtain, through a media council. Performance of that role implies a large and diverse number of readers liable to feel strongly concerned about particular editorial items relating directly to reportage of their own affairs. At the present time most complaints against Third World newspapers would be likely to come from members of a smallish group, more often than not governmental, probably already well able to make their views known and felt in other ways. But media councils have become multi-faceted. Since they were the corporate conscience of the communicators they were able to act as independent mediators between the communicators, and such economic or political forces which were striving to exercise control over the media for their own ends. Researches, particularly into monopolistic trends have been additional activities. In these, and other ways which will be discussed later, media councils in Third World countries can help constructively in the development of national media of mass communication. They can be a corporate voice against those who wish to use the media to manipulate opinion ; they can help to preserve its fundamental purpose in terms of human rights and dignities, and they can encourage both corporate and individual self-determination.

In Third World terms especially, a media council can be seen as part of a country's overall plan of development. It can also be a bridge between the problems of media development in the Third World and the established

New International Economic Order the New International Information Order is less likely to become a reality. The New International Information Order can help to bring the New International Economic Order to come to pass. Their interrelationship is as vital as that.

The Colombo Conference went on to say that «The non-aligned countries must achieve identification and assertion of their national and cultural identity by their own efforts, as well as by a more active co-operation on the bilateral, regional and inter-regional level and by the co-ordination of their activities within the United Nations and other international forums. It is particularly necessary for the non-aligned countries to strengthen their actual infrastructure and to take the maximum advantages of the scientific and technical progress achieved in this field, facilitating thus a more complete dissemination of objective information among their public as well as in the world, on the topics or events occurring in the non-aligned countries in the social, economic, cultural and other fields, as well as their increasing role in the international community».

Even if the Third World media were to seek to be financially successful and entirely self-supporting in terms of Western development and chose to aim at producing mere carbon copies of Western news media, time is not on their side. It would take many years to achieve this, and the people of the Third World do not want to wait so long, apart from the fact that the end result envisaged above is not what they want and is not in conformity with the aims of the Colombo Conference.

But media councils could be an important aid to achieving the aims of Colombo, particularly in terms of helping to solve the first of the two problems, that of inertia and failure to make mass communication a sufficiently important development priority. They cannot, however, of themselves solve the second problem, that of lack of finance. In few Third World countries can the media themselves afford to set up and run even on modest lines, their own media council. Developed countries such as Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, to name only a few, have media councils which find that their work is limited by lack of adequate finance. Where money comes only from within the newspaper industry the problem is most acute; where part of the money comes from this source and the balance is made up from government grants, there is the feeling that the integrity of the media council is compromised.

In Third World countries where newspapers and broadcasting are already government-owned, government-controlled and government committed, it is pertinent to ask not only who else but the government could provide the finances but also what additional purposes could a media council serve? When interposed between the government and the media, and this is the most extreme case which is likely to arise, a media council can place government control and risk of government manipulation at one stage removed. It can also be, if widely enough based, an important bargaining force with

the government and it can be supportive of the media, especially in those Third World countries where, despite a strong element of government control, the media already takes an independent line on many issues. It can also, as will be explained later in a more general context, intervene in matters of the right use of technological resources. Where newspapers and possibly broadcasting are either partially or fully in private hands, a media council can seek out and try to correct commercial exploitation particularly from overseas, since this is equally as dangerous as government manipulation, particularly in sociological terms. Both commercial and governmental exploitation of the media for ulterior purposes violates the spirit of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the observing of which should always be an integral part of a media council's constitution. Such a body can help on the one hand to keep in check monopolistic tendencies and to warn of their dangers. On the other hand, it can pay attention to the serious effect of dissipation of effort. It is not always realized even in Western media circles where competition is held to be good, that too much competition can also be counter-productive. If rivals are using scarce resources — broadcasting frequencies, overseas currency to buy equipment, newsprint etc, and the services of a limited number of trained people, all at the same time, all in the same way, and all directed at the same audience, the range of choice placed before the public can be restricted and not extended. The qualitative nature of the communication can be reduced. The mistake is often made of seeing merit only in the quantitative nature of mass communication and to regard this as a criteria of excellence and of freedom, and in consequence to ignore qualitative values. This is a luxury which the Western developed countries may be able to afford, but Third World countries certainly cannot. They must take every possible step open to them to maximize the effect of their own mass communications media as part of their contribution to the Colombo Conference's call for the «rectification of lack of balance». Opportunities for choice of information sources are more effective when multifaceted than when they are merely duplicated.

In terms of the qualitative value of information in Third World countries it is important also to remember the words of an earlier Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, that held in Algier in 1973. Among a number of affirmations, the Conference proclaimed that they should «consider that cultural alienation and imported civilizations imposed by imperialism and colonialization should be countered by repersonalization and by the constant and determined recourse to the social and cultural values of the people that define them as a sovereign people». Taken as an implicit aim of Third World media councils this adds to the significance of their role during the growth period and the evolution of a mass media philosophy in a Third World country, where the mass media themselves are as yet in the process of maturing and finding their own identity.

ii) Formulation of general advice, rules and policy as well as ethical recommendations affecting the operations of the media ; force of law or any other sanctions accorded to such rules.

iii) Publications : Annual reports, research studies on topics pertaining to the media, etc.

D) Machinery for handling specific complaints :

i) Who is entitled to complain ? ; on what grounds ; machinery for rejecting invalid complaints ; does the council itself initiate complaints ?

ii) Procedure : hearing of evidence ; legal or other outside representation or not ; voting, formulation of decisions, publishing and promulgation of decisions ; obligations on media to publish adjudications,

disciplinary powers ; source of authority for enforcing disciplinary powers, if any ; possibility of appeal by complainant or defendant to any higher authority against a decision by the council ; meetings held in public or private.

iii) Public relations. There must be a continual promotion of general awareness of a media council's existence, its purpose and the possibility of recourse to it, within the media themselves ; with the government ; with the legal profession ; with the general public ; with any academic institutions involved in mass communication studies ; with other mass communication media councils within the same country, within the same region ; throughout the world.

## Final Conclusions

In the country by country survey, an attempt has been made to isolate only factors of difference or of interest. No attempt has been made to repeat or to make continual references to the more common elements. That these exist in the Codes concerned will, it is hoped, be taken for granted. However the factors of difference can be listed as :

1. A significant variation in the wording of one or more of the forms which in other respects are commonly accepted. This is usually done to meet a special need.
2. The inclusion of a special clause (as distinct from mere variation of a widely used form) suited to the ethnic, cultural, or social needs of the country, and not appearing in the Codes of other countries.
3. The inclusion of an original clause in one country's Code which might well be considered by some other countries as equally applicable to their own conditions.
4. The method of operation of a Code of Practice or its application, when it is significantly different from generally accepted international practice.
5. Omissions which might be considered to be significant.

The elements which are commonly to be found in most Codes and which, therefore, have been given most emphasis in the Draft Codes earlier are :

1. The emphasis upon the integrity, truth and objectivity of all forms of news collection and dissemination.
2. The maintenance at all times of the free flow of information, from governments to those whom they govern, and from those who are governed to the governors.
3. The need for the maximum professionalism. A need for the respect and protection of the personal integrity of the journalist by those employing him/her.
4. Loyalty to one's country coupled with a refusal to use one's position as a journalist to undermine its well-being, especially for monetary or ideological reasons or at the behest of a foreign power.
5. Preservation of the confidentiality of sources where this is justified and an agreement so to do has been entered upon ; disclosing the sources of information

in those circumstances where the reader/listener requires that information in order to be able to make proper judgement as to the validity, etc. of the information.

In the survey a number of significant trends emerged.

They can be summarized thus :

1. It is preferable, when any Code of Practice is devised, or Court of Honour set up, that it should arise freely and from the willing desire of the communicators, and not be imposed by any arbitrary authority.
2. Notwithstanding anything said in 1 above, it is also desirable that, at the same time, there should be some form of lay participation in its preparation and subsequent administration.
3. No Code nor Court, like no chain, is stronger than its weakest link. Communicators are human and suffer from all the failings of humanity. They are not a superior race, apart. Only in exceptional circumstances is it possible for a professional Code or Court of Honour to operate entirely successfully, without there being some system of enforcement in the background.
4. Though there must be a great deal in common there are certain fundamental differences which will always prevail between the needs of newspapers and of broadcasting authorities. Broadcasting cannot exist without a greater measure of international licensing and control of hours of output, station strength, etc.
5. Though all people participating in the communications industry have certain aims and purposes in common, since the industry is itself woven out of a number of different strands, there can be areas of conflict between Codes designed by one section of the industry when set against those of another section.
6. There is a growing desire on the part of those who work in the media to have some say in how the media is run and in its philosophies, instead of being mere pawns, whether of capitalist interests or of governments. This desire to be part of the destiny of the industry goes by many names, such as worker-participation, self-determination, Chapel power (in

# Appendix

## 1. AUSTRALIA

### (Code of Ethics of Australian Journalists Association)

Rule 49 of the Australian Journalists Association's Constitution and Rules provides that each member shall observe the following Code of Ethics in his employment :

1. He shall report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
2. He shall not suppress essential facts and shall not distort the truth by omission or wrong or improper emphasis.
3. He shall in all circumstances respect all confidences received by him in the course of his calling.
4. He shall observe at all time the fraternal obligations arising from his membership of the Association, and shall not on any occasion take unfair or improper advantage of a fellow member of the Association.
5. He shall not allow his personal interests to influence him in the discharge of his duties nor shall he accept or offer any present, gift or other consideration benefit or advantage of whatsoever kind if such acceptance or offer is of a character which may have the effect of so influencing or benefiting him.
6. He shall use only fair and honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
7. He shall reveal his identity as a representative of the Press or of radio or television services before obtaining any personal interview for the purpose of using it for publication.
8. He shall do his utmost to maintain full confidence in the integrity and dignity of the calling of a Journalist.

The Rules make provision for District Ethics Committees to investigate complaints of violation of and/or refusal the Code of Ethics and to make recommendations to the District Committee. Recommendations of Ethics Committees must be sent by the District Committee to the General Secretary. The Respondent member is then notified of the recommendation and of his right of appeal to Federal Executive or to a District Ethics Appeal

Committee. A Respondent member has the right to appeal to Federation Council against a decision of an Ethics Appeal Committee or a decision of Federal Executive.

Under Rule 50 a member shall be deemed to have committed an offence if, after procedures as laid down in the Rules, he shall have been found guilty of any of the following :

1. Violation of and/or refusal to observe the Rules of the Association.
2. Violation of and/or refusal to observe a decision of Federal Council, Federal Executive or a District Committee, attention to which has been drawn in the official Journal of the Association or in a letter memorandum or bulletin issued by Federal Council, Federal Executive or a District Committee.
3. Acting detrimentally to the objects of the Association.
4. Violation of and/or refusal to carry out a provision of an industrial award, determination or agreement applicable to him.
5. Disclosing to a person not entitled to know it any confidential matter of the Association.
6. Misappropriating money and/or property belonging to the Association.
7. Violation of and/or refusal to observe the Association's Code of Ethics.

A member found guilty of an offence shall be liable to any of the following penalties, namely, warning, rebuke, censure, disbarment from holding office, suspension and/or removal from office, fine (to a maximum of \$ 100), expulsion from membership of the Association.

## 2. CANADA

### A - Code of Broadcast News Ethics

#### Radio Television News Directors Association of Canada

Recognizing the importance to a Democracy of an informed public, the members of the Radio Television

pretext to cite the explanations and to relate the circumstances without which this fact would be unintelligible ;

11. Strive constantly, by use of all the techniques and methods available to the press, by personal effort or sustained work, by research and innovation, to make information available to the public.
12. Undertake, if he abandons his profession, no longer to take advantage of the rights or the titles to which he has no further title.

### 3. EGYPT (ARAB REPUBLIC OF)

#### Charter of Work and Code of Ethics in the Press.

*We, egyptian journalists,*

*Believing* in the positive role played by the national press throughout the long struggle of the Egyptian people, by giving expression to its aspirations, sharing its sufferings and supporting its great movement for liberation from all forms of exploitation and oppression,

*Convinced* that the press should continue to fulfill the constructive mission it has shouldered in its march alongside the Revolution of 23 July 1952, supporting its political and social endeavour and protecting its progressive achievements in the service of Egyptian and Arab masses and its promise of fulfilment to their legitimate hopes and aspirations,

*Emphasizing* the importance and the seriousness of the responsibility of the press to be a true mirror of society, and a source of guidance and leadership in the service of the basic principles formulated by the Egyptian people in its long struggle for liberation,

*Firmly believing* that the press should remain, by truth alone, a weapon in the hands of the people, that its freedom can only exist with the people's support and as an extension of its freedom, and that it should serve the interests of the working masses as expressed in their solidarity within the Arab Socialist Union,

*State*

That the ethics of journalistic work are not a function of good performance alone, but derive primarily from the honourable objective served by the published word. The word which is not committed to the service of our people's progress is a word devoid of honour, and the honour of commitment in press work can only be achieved when that work is a conscious choice, independent of all kinds of tutelage, censorship, orientation and containment ;

That independent undertaking by the press of its role, on its own social responsibility in the service of the people and under its sole control, is the prime condition of honourable performance and responsibility in journalistic work ; and

On the basis of this statement, in fulfilment by the journalists, individually and collectively, of their

responsibility, and in implementation of Article 72 of Law No. 76/1970 on the Establishment of the Press Syndicate, which makes it incumbent upon every journalist to adhere to his professional conduct to the principles of honour, honesty and impartiality, and to the ethics and traditions of the profession,

*Declare*

1. Our total adherence to the basic instruments which guide the struggle of the Egyptian people, particularly the Charter of National Action (1962), the Declaration of 30 March (1968) and the Programme of National Action (1971), and to all the principles and objectives defined therein, and, within this adherence, we emphasize the following principles in particular :

(a) Preservation, free from usurpation, occupation and subservience ;

(b) Pursuit of the evolution towards socialism as a system and a way of life and social behaviour ;

(c) Democracy as the only healthy and sound framework for practising political liberties, foremost among which are the freedom of the word of expression and of opinion ;

(d) Spiritual values as an essential component of the cultural and intellectual heritage of the Egyptian people, and as a motive force for its struggle ;

(e) Building up of Arab Egypt as a historical truth and as a necessity of its future and destiny ;

(f) Alliance with the forces of progressive revolution all over the world, given that the Arab revolution, led by the Egyptian people, is an integral part of the international struggle for freedom and socialism ;

(g) Promotion of work, peace and international co-operation in line with the United Nations Charter and international conventions and agreements ;

(h) Defence of the freedom of the press against any encroachment, and the indictment of anyone who accepts such an encroachment or takes part therein ; this being in confirmation of the right of the working masses, and especially the workers, peasants and intellectuals, to know the whole truth and freely express their opinion ;

2. Our full commitment not to obtain, or try to obtain, information or facts except by legitimate means, to transmit them truthfully and honestly to the masses and to protect the press against any deviation from professional ethics and against any prejudice to the interests of the working masses, who are the real proprietors of the press. This commitment shall include abstention from publishing doubtful information, misrepresenting correct information, attributing words or deeds to any person or party without adequate veri-



ferred to non-journalistic jobs, demoted, barred from performing their work in any way or subjected to any penalty except within the framework of the Law of their Syndicate and by the authority designated to take the disciplinary measures provided for in that Law. Consequently, no outside authority shall interfere in the affairs of journalists, and regulations should be drawn up to determine the relationships between journalists within their institutions ;

4. Definition and regulation of the role of advertising in a way which is compatible with the conditions and circumstances of a society in process of transformation into a socialist one and struggling for liberation from economic exploitation, and precludes the possibility of publicity becoming a means of pressure on the press and consequently of dominating it ;
5. The obligation of all the responsible authorities to supply all the facts, information and data available to them to the journalists who ask for them, so as to ensure the right of the masses to know all the facts and be informed of all affairs ;
6. Elimination of all obstacles and restrictions barring journalists from access to external sources of information, by making these sources available and removing, for the benefit of journalists, the censorship imposed on foreign papers and periodicals ;
7. Ensuring the right of journalists to cover any event of international importance on the site of the event regardless of the nature of the State's official relations with the country where it has occurred ;
8. Recognition of the journalist's right to express his own point of view, regardless of differences in ideological orientation, provided that such expression does not run counter to the principles enunciated in the four political instruments already mentioned in this Charter ;
9. The board of the Press Syndicate shall contact the competent authorities with a view to implementing these demands and having them officially proclaimed by the President of the Arab Socialist Union ;
10. We also declare that any violation of the provisions of this Charter after its issue shall be considered a deviation from the ethics of the profession, and the Syndicate's Board shall take against the offender the disciplinary measures provided for in Law No. 76/1970 on the establishment of the Press Syndicate.

Adopted in 1972.

## 4. INDIA

### The New Press Code of India

The latest Press Code to be announced is «a set of detailed rules to govern journalistic ethics which will enable the newspapers and journalists to discharge their high social and national responsibilities». The Code which has the legislative authority of the Government of India was announced by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting in May 1976, and has the acceptance of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference. After a preamble there are fourteen points :

«As the press is an essential organ of the democratic set-up, an important vehicle of communication and an instrument in the creation of public opinion, the journalists should regard their profession as a trust to serve public interest. In pursuance of this objective, the press should provide a truthful, comprehensive and reliable account of the events in a context which gives them meaning ; project a representative picture of the constituent groups in society ; regard itself as a forum for comment and criticism and discharge social responsibility by clarifying the goals and values of society.

Our goals are enshrined in the preamble to the Constitution which embodies «the resolve of the people to secure for all citizens ; justice, social, economic and political ; liberty of thought, expression, belief faith and worship ; equality of status and of opportunity ; and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation». This preamble is reinforced by the Directive Principles of State Policy which lay down that the State shall strive «to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of the national life.»

«To discharge this social responsibility, it is evident that the moral and ethical behaviour of the press should reflect the values of society at large ; so should criticism.

«In pursuance of this trust and social responsibility, the following Code of Ethics will be applicable :

1) In the discharge of their duties, journalists shall attach full value, to fundamental human and social rights, shall hold good faith and fair play in news, reports and comments as essential professional obligations.

2) Journalists and newspapers shall endeavour to highlight and promote activities of the State and public which aim at national unity, solidarity, integrity and economic and social progress.

3) Journalists and newspapers shall avoid reports and comments which tends to promote tensions likely to lead, or leading to civil disorder, mutiny or rebellion. Violence must be condemned unequivocally.

4) Journalists and newspapers shall ensure that information disseminated is factual. No fact shall be

will be unable to operate or work. Therefore, all members of the Association should make efforts to co-operate and maintain a higher ethical standard by promoting their moral unity, guaranteeing free access to news material and assisting each other in newspaper production. Thus, the association of newspapers which strictly observe the Canons of Journalism shall be able to accelerate and ensure the democratization of Japan and simultaneously elevate Japanese newspapers to the world standard.

(Adopted in 1946).

## 6. SWEDEN

### The Rules of the Swedish Newspaper Publishers' Association (TU) on text advertising.

The editorial contents :

The aim of the editorial contents of a newspaper or a journal is to inform, comment and entertain. These contents shall be the result of exclusively editorial initiatives and judgement.

The editorial staff decides :

The confidence of the public in the activity of the press as an intermediary of news and information must be maintained. This presupposes that the editorial staff constantly stands guard over their duty to decide on the editorial contents of the newspaper.

A favourable reference in an editorial place to a person, an organization, or an enterprise is often interpreted as free advertising, while a negative one is interpreted by many as harmful publicity. None of these circumstances should, however, be a basis for journalistic judgement. Only the news value and information value of the contents should be decisive.

Suspicion must not arise that outsiders can influence the decisions of the editorial staff concerning the journalistic shape of the newspaper. Any kind of reference in the text or publication of a picture, being the condition for advertisement, must be rejected.

Text advertising :

The editorial staff will in each particular case judge the publication value of texts and pictures intended for editorial publication. Texts and pictures not in line with editorial demands for news value or information value must then be rejected. This applies mainly to :

- Messages from private or public enterprises (also including so called entertainment industry) ;
- messages from authorities ;
- messages from organizations of commercial life or professions ;

but also other demands for space, where the journalistic news and information value is doubtful or none, should be rejected.

Examples referring to the basic rules :

General principles

Generally, the rule is that the aspect of news and information should always be observed, when the edito-

rial staff considers some material for publication. Quite often, a text or picture submitted to the newspaper has only a commercial or other kind of advertising value. The interest of publication lies then with the sender, not with the newspaper. In such a case it is the journalistic duty of the editorial staff to reject the publication of the material.

Often, however, such a text or picture, arising from a more or less commercial aim, may have at the same time considerable common news and information value. In such a case it is journalistically correct to publish the material in the interest of the public. It will then be important to prepare another edition of the material or through re-arrangement hold up what has news and information value, thereby preventing that the commercial feature could be greater than warranted by the journalistic valuation.

A new model car can be grand news the first time it is published. The interest of the reader and the manufacturer will then concur. But if a newspaper has once given publicity to a new car model, the news value will fall considerably when the new car is again introduced locally.

In the same way a fashion show may give some information about current clothes — but more often only about the collection of one manufacturer or shop. A report from an isolated fashion show, in other words, gives the reader only limited information. Editorial initiatives to collocate news about clothes from different factories and shops give the reader broader and better information.

To publish commercial articles slackly edited, to report mercantile arrangements of different kinds as a mere routine, to insert statements from authorities and organizations without a thought of their news and information value, to give any way to the pressure or appeal of advertisers, to publish an uninteresting text in the «interest of Society» or the «common good», this is to indulge in the publication of text advertising.

Always to judge the publication value to the readers of some material, to take your own initiative instead of letting others outside the editorial staff do it, constantly to place the demands of the reader above claims, journalistically unwarranted, to publicity from businesses, organizations and authorities — this is to keep the text advertising away from the columns of the newspaper.

Business enterprises :

Information on business hours of enterprises, demonstrations, assemblies of information, and prize competitions are regarded as text advertising and should be rejected on principle.

The greatest restriction should be observed regarding the publicity given to newly-established shops and rebuilding of shops. Consider the fact that the news value varies with the size of the community.

A list of contractors and suppliers to construction jobs must not be inserted. Exceptions may be made for main contractors and architects.

2. The proprietors have an ultimate responsibility for the character and successful development of a publication, including in some cases its political tradition. But, unless a proprietor chooses to be his own editor, that responsibility is best discharged by choosing an editor and giving him full responsibility for the conduct and content of the publication.
3. The editor shall accept and be accorded final responsibility in law and in practice for the content of his publication.
4. While it is proper for any individual or group to seek to influence an editor's decision on the content or conduct of his publication, any threat or action aimed at preventing him from exercising his free and independent judgement would amount to improper pressure.
5. The editor shall consider himself at all times a custodian of the Freedom of the Press. Both the law and the Press Council accept that Freedom of the Press includes freedom to be partisan. But an editor has an obligation to allow people who are criticized a reasonable opportunity to reply and to ensure that facts in news stories are not distorted or misleadingly incomplete or that any item is omitted for improper reasons. It is an editor's duty to support his staff against unjustified criticism and respect their professional integrity.
6. The editor shall be free to choose his contributors and to publish or not to publish any articles or other material. The public should at all times be able to submit items and photographs and the final decision whether they should be included shall rest with the editor.
7. The editor shall be responsible for the appointment and training of his staff. He shall at all times be free to choose the journalist best qualified in his opinion to cover a particular assignment and shall resist any improper pressure on him to influence his choice.
8. The editor of a publication, or other person exercising the duties of an editor in his absence, shall be enabled to discharge these duties free from any obligation to belong to a trade union. An editor shall be free at all times to perform any editorial function and to endeavour to produce his publication using what skills and resources he has at his command.
9. Any journalist shall be free to belong to the trade union of his choice. A journalist shall not be arbitrarily or unreasonably excluded from membership of a trade union.
10. In any dispute arising from the interpretation or application of the principles enumerated in this Charter, whether between a member of the public and a newspaper, or between a proprietor and an editor, or between either and a staff member, the Press Council, as at present constituted, shall be the proper authority to determine the issue.

#### D. Objects of the United Kingdom Press Council

The Articles of Constitution of The Press Council approved by The Newspaper Publishers' Association Ltd., The Newspaper Society, Periodical Publishers Association Ltd., The Scottish Daily Newspaper Society, Scottish Newspaper Proprietors' Association, The Institute of Journalists, The National Union of Journalists and The Guild of British Newspaper Editors state that the Objects of the Council are :

1. To preserve the established freedom of the British Press.
2. To maintain the character of the British Press in accordance with the highest professional and commercial standards.
3. To consider complaints about the conduct of the Press or the conduct of persons and organizations towards the Press ; to deal with these complaints in whatever manner might seem practical and appropriate and record resultant action.
4. To keep under review developments likely to restrict the supply of information of public interest and importance.
5. To report publicly on developments that may tend towards greater concentration or monopoly in the Press (including changes in ownership, control and growth of Press undertakings) and to publish statistical information relating thereto.
6. To make representations on appropriate occasions to the Government, organs of the United Nations and to Press organizations abroad.
7. To publish periodical reports recording the Council's work and to review from time to time, developments in the Press and the factors affecting them.

#### E. National Union of Journalists

Like other trade unions, formed for mutual protection and economic betterment, the National Union of Journalists desires and encourages its members to maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct.

Through years of courageous struggle for better wages and working conditions its pioneers and their successors have kept these aims in mind, and have made provision in Union rules not only for penalties on offenders, but for the guidance and financial support of members who may suffer loss of work for conforming to Union principles.

While punishment by fine, suspension or expulsion is provided for in cases of «conduct detrimental to the interests of the Union or of the profession», any member who is victimized (Rule 20, clause (f) for refusing to do

This rule does not apply to so-called special articles unmistakably devoted to advocacy or characterized by a signature authorizing the writer's own conclusions and interpretations.

#### VI. *Fair play.*

A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard ; right practice demands the giving of such opportunity in all cases of serious accusation outside judicial proceedings.

1. A newspaper should not invade private rights or feelings without sure warrant of public right as distinguished from public curiosity.

2. It is the privilege, as it is the duty, of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own serious mistakes of fact or opinion, whatever their origin.

#### VII. *Decency.*

A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if, while professing high moral purpose it supplies incentives to base conduct, such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good. Lacking authority to enforce its canons, the journalism here represented can but express the hope that deliberate pandering to vicious instincts will encounter effective public disapproval or yield to the influence of a preponderant professional condemnation.

Adopted 1923.

### B. The Code of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, believes the duty of journalists is to serve the truth.

We believe the agencies of mass communication are carriers of public discussion and information, acting on their Constitutional mandate and freedom to learn and report the facts.

We believe in public enlightenment as the forerunner of justice, and in our Constitutional role to seek the truth as part of the public's right to know the truth.

We believe those responsibilities carry obligations that require journalists to perform with intelligence, objectivity, accuracy, and fairness.

To these ends, we declare acceptance of the standards of practice here set forth :

#### I. *Responsibility :*

The public's right to know of events of public importance and interest is the overriding mission of the mass media. The purpose of distributing news and enlightened opinion is to serve the general welfare. Journalists who use their professional status as representatives of the public for selfish or other unworthy motives violate a high trust.

#### II. *Freedom of the press :*

Freedom of the press is to be guarded as an inalienable right of people in a free society. It carries with it the free-

dom and the responsibility to discuss, question, and challenge actions and utterances of our government and of our public and private institutions. Journalists uphold the right to speak unpopular opinions and the privilege to agree with the majority.

#### III. *Ethics :*

Journalists must be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

1. Gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment or privileges can compromise the integrity of journalists and their employers. Nothing of value should be accepted.

2. Secondary employment, political involvement, holding public office, and service in community organizations should be avoided if it compromises the integrity of journalists and their employers. Journalists and their employers should conduct their personal lives in a manner which protects them from conflict of interest, real or apparent. Their responsibilities to the public are paramount. That is the nature of their profession.

3. So-called news communications from private sources should not be published or broadcast without substantiation of their claims to news value.

4. Journalists will seek news that serves the public interest despite the obstacles. They will make constant efforts to assure that the public's business is conducted in public and that public records are open to public inspection.

5. Journalists acknowledge the newsman's ethic of protecting confidential sources of information.

#### IV. *Accuracy and objectivity :*

Good faith with the public is the foundation of all worthy journalism.

1. Truth is our ultimate goal.

2. Objectivity in reporting the news is another goal which serves as the mark of an experienced professional. It is a standard of performance toward which we strive. We honour those who achieve it.

3. There is no excuse for inaccuracies or lack of thoroughness.

4. Newspaper headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles they accompany. Photographs and telecasts should give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight a minor incident out of context.

5. Sound practice makes clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue.

6. Partisanship in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth violates the spirit of American journalism.

7. Journalists recognize their responsibility for offering informed analysis, comment, and editorial opinion on public events and issues. They accept the obligation to present such material by individuals whose competence, experience, and judgment qualify them for it.

ded accusations, the acceptance of bribe in any form in consideration of either publication or suppression of news ;

9. — Never to confuse the profession of a journalist with that of advertisements salesman or a propagandist and to refuse any direct or indirect orders from advertisers.

10. — To resist every pressure and to accept editorial orders only from the responsible persons of the editorial staff.

Every journalist worthy of that name deems it his duty faithfully to observe the principles stated above. Within the general law of each country, the journalist recognises, in professional matters, the jurisdiction of his colleagues only ; he excludes every kind of interference by governments or others.

#### *Declaration of rights*

1. — Journalists claim free access to all information sources, and the right to freely enquire on all events conditioning public life. Therefore, secret of public or private affairs may be opposed only to journalists in exceptional cases and for clearly expressed motives ;

2. — The journalist has the right to refuse subordination to anything contrary to the general policy of the information organ to which he collaborates such as it has been laid down by writing and incorporated in his contract of employment, as well as any subordination not clearly implicated by this general policy ;

3. — A journalist cannot be compelled to perform a professional act or to express an opinion contrary to his convictions or his conscience ;

4. — The editorial staff has obligatorily to be informed on all important decisions which may influence the life of the enterprise. It should at least be consulted before a definitive decision on all matters related to the composition of the editorial staff e.g. recruitment, dismissals, mutations and promotion of journalists is taken.

5. — Taking in account his functions and responsibilities, the journalist is entitled not only to the advantages resulting from collective agreements but also to an individual contract of employment, ensuring the material and moral security of his work as well as a wage system corresponding to his social condition and guaranteeing his economic independence.

### **11. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS**

(Document presented by IOJ to the Collective Consultations on Codes of Ethics for the Mass Media organized by Unesco, Paris, 12-13 Nov. 1973)

1. The journalist should try to verify the veracity of the news that he publishes or comments on ; if this verification is impossible, he should publish it with reserva-

tions ; he should abstain from distorting or tendentiously truncating it ; he should rectify it, if it subsequently proves to be erroneous.

2. The journalist should assume the responsibility for what he publishes. He should respect professional secrecy and should be satisfied with publishing news communicated to him under these conditions. He should not reveal the source of his information, except to his responsible superior, if the latter also considers himself bound by professional secrecy ; he should be released from this secrecy only if his source of information gives him his authorization, or if it is proved that this source of information has clearly misguided him for reasons of economic, political or personal gain. If facts seriously affecting the life of the community or related to common-law crime are concerned, then respect for professional secrecy is incumbent on the personal conscience of the journalist.

3. The journalist should avoid slander, defamation and insults ; both with respect to individuals and to ethnic, religious and national groups.

Unless he is expressly authorized by the persons concerned, he should respect the private lives of individuals provided that this has no implications of general interest.

4. The journalist should safeguard the dignity of the profession. He should abstain from resorting to fraudulent means of gathering his news. He should not solicit or accept any remuneration or any personal advantage from third parties for publishing, or not publishing, or distorting information. He should exclude from his work all commercial publicity.

5. The journalist should try, in his fraternal relations, to maintain an equilibrium between loyal competition and the necessary solidarity. He must not indulge in plagiarism. He should defend any colleagues who may be persecuted for their devotion to freedom and to the ethical principles of the profession. He must not permit, in recruitment or in the distribution of professional tasks, any discrimination based on race or religion.

6. The journalist is above all in the service of the public interest. In his work, he should help to strengthen the basic principles of human rights and the development of a better mutual knowledge and understanding among peoples. He should therefore avoid approving or urging recourse to violence as a means of resolving international litigation. He must be careful not to encourage racial discrimination or racial, ethnic, national or religious hatreds.

### **12. DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CODES OF ETHICS FOR INFORMATION PERSONNEL (United Nations)**

#### *Preamble*

Freedom of information and of the Press is a fundamental human right and is the touchstone of all the freedoms consecrated in the Charter of the United Nations and

sional secrecy regarding sources of information obtained in confidence. The International Organization of Journalists has stated that the journalist respects professional secrecy and keeps private information communicated to him under this condition. He also does not reveal the sources of his information except to his responsible superior if he considers the latter is also bound by the principle of secrecy).

4. *Calumny and slander.* While in most cases calumny and slander are subject to legal bars, the avoidance of such acts is also a major responsibility which has been included in many existing codes.

5. *Plagiarism.* Once again, there are laws concerning plagiarism but the codes which include an injunction against this practice are particularly concerned with professional solidarity and the responsibility of a journalist to avoid actions which adversely affect a colleague.

(In this connexion, the signing of an article prepared by a fellow journalist was singled out).

6. *Publicity or propaganda.* The journalist should not accept payment in money or services for any story except from the media organization for which he works. Since his first loyalty should be to this organization, he should also avoid including commercial publicity in any story.

#### *Concepts directed particularly to management*

1. *Freedom of information.* The right to information implies as wide as possible a gamut of points of view on a particular event. In the case of the written press, where there are fewer monopolies than there are in many cases in the field of radio and television, freedom of information is best served by the existence of competing newspapers. In this connexion, therefore, the natural competition among newspapers should not be employed to diminish their number. The existence of the printed press along with the other electronic news media can also help to provide that diversity of news which is recognizably desirable. Again, therefore, it is to their mutual interest that the competing media function simultaneously.

2. *Service to the public.* In view of the range and scope of the mass media, they occupy an important position in serving the public. As a result, they should accept moral as well as legal responsibility for the way they handle news. This implies not only avoidance of distortion or manipulation of the news but also the positive effort to promote better understanding within a community and on the international level.

3. *Correction of errors.* Libel and slander laws ensure to a certain extent the correction of errors in the written or oral press. The standards of good journalism require that to the extent feasible mass media institutions should not await legal action but endeavour to diffuse corrections to honest errors that may have been committed under the pressure of deadlines or because of erroneous information. A number of countries have attempted to

regulate the right to correction by law and a United Nations convention on this subject has entered into operation.

(The consultations heard that, particularly for television broadcasters, the correction of erroneous reports imposes a heavy commitment upon the limited time available for news. It is therefore necessary to recognize that the correction process among broadcasters may be restricted to major errors rather than minor ones, such as a mistake in a name or address).

4. *Right to reply.* As in the preceding principle, the right to reply is as much a moral commitment as a legal one. The written press in many countries has long adopted the principle that this is an inherent right of individuals. For radio and television, the right to reply, however, is again conditioned by the amount of time available for news and also the importance of the event reported.

### **13. COLLECTIVE CONSULTATIONS ON CODES OF ETHICS FOR THE MASS MEDIA**

Unesco House, Paris, 12-13 November 1973

On 12 and 13 November 1973, representatives of international non-governmental organizations of press, radio and television joined the Unesco Secretariat in consultations at Headquarters on codes of ethics adopted by mass media organizations in different parts of the world.

The collective consultations discussed three techniques for the preparation of guiding principles in the field of ethics. The first was the drafting of a single code that might be of use to professional organizations which did not as yet possess one. The second would be to draft a code containing several versions of certain articles designed to meet the varying needs of media organizations in different countries and differing social and economic systems. The third possibility would be simply to present a kind of «shopping list» of concepts which might be adopted in whole or in part by individual organizations of press, film, radio, television and advertising.

#### *Ethical principles for journalists*

An examination of the precepts embodied in existing codes of ethics indicates that the broad concepts involved apply to various aspects of the communication process. Some cover the profession as a whole ; but others concern particularly working journalists, while still another set of ideas refers essentially to management. This latter category would include specifically radio and television as well as the press.

#### *Concepts for the profession as a whole*

1. *Truthfulness* in reporting. This basic principle of accuracy in reporting carries with it, as an essential concomitant, the *integrity* of those at the journalistic and management levels.



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social function. As the freedom of the press is presented as the cornerstone of democracy, one could not better express the interaction of the one with the other.

According to the code, journalists should not be the victims of hostile manoeuvres or pursuits while carrying out their job.

Within the framework of their duties and fundamental rights as journalists, the Colombian Code focusses on the fact that they are not only serving the cause of truth, etc. but also the ideals of social progress and friendship between peoples. They are under an obligation to fight against all hostility to the freedom of the press and to lend full assistance to all brothers who are unjustly persecuted.

The benefits of the conscience clause, to be obtained from the journalist's enterprise, should be recognized by the employment contract which ties them, and the journalist should not tolerate any coercion whatsoever from his enterprise which would be prejudicial to the truth which it is his job to serve.

One clause of the Colombian Code lays out that not only should the journalist condemn and fight against racial, national, religious or political discrimination, but he should always look out for popular democratic rights.

Finally, one particularly strict rule prohibits the solicitation or acceptance of gifts for himself or his brother journalists, whatever the motive of the gift.

## 5. CUBA

The Union of Journalists of Cuba (UPEC) is an organization, as stated in its first Article, which has as its main objective to contribute to the political, ideological, cultural and technical development of Cuban journalists. It has 2,593 members, over 50,000 voluntary correspondents and 300 associate contributors.

Their aims are (art. 3) *inter alia* :

- To strive for the development of the press as an instrument acting in support of the building of socialism and communism, in defence of the country, in support of the struggles of the peoples of the world against imperialism, in support of international solidarity, and for world peace ; all this on the basis of disseminating truth ;
- To contribute to the cultural, technical and professional developments of Cuban journalists ;
- To strengthen relations with other socialist countries ;
- To participate in the solution of professional problems of Cuban journalists.

Membership shall be extended to all those who act in favour and defend the principles of Cuban society in all its aspects ; ..., all those whose actions are based on socialist moral and ethical principles (art. 9). To maintain those principles is, obviously, one of the duties of a revolutionary journalist (art. 12). The Press Committee

can, according to art. 13, impose sanctions in cases of unwarranted or unjustified breach of Union discipline, of systematic non-implementation of the inherent obligations which follow from membership in the organization, as well as of attitudes which compromise the dignity of a journalist.

## 6. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

It is probably safe to say that more words have been «spilt» about the Freedom of the Press and about the ethics of communication in the USA than anywhere else in the world. It has almost become a national hobby, as an eminent Professor of Journalism at a USA University once said. Practically every University has its journalism faculty ; the books ; magazines and articles devoted to one or another aspect of the media of mass communication would fill a large library. The Codes are numerous. Like Australia, where the same multiplicity exists, the journalists, the editors, the newspaper proprietors, radio and television workers, script writers, advertising people, motion picture people and a few more who are on the fringes of mass communication, all have their special Codes. It is a moot point however how many of them are worth anything more in practice than the paper upon which they are written. The Codes of the American Society of Newspaper Editor (1923), of the Journalists Association Sigma Delta Chi (1973), which are the most prestigious, are given in the Appendix.

There are in the Codes of radio and television practitioners some additional requirements regarding programme standards, which are of interest. These include protecting the audience from deceptive programme standards ; the prohibition of «profanity, obscenity, smut and vulgarity» ; strong guidelines to prevent racial discrimination or the creation of racial stereotypes ; the request that «care should be exercised so that cigarette smoking will not be depicted in a manner to impress the youth of our country as a desirable habit worthy of imitation» ; and the very unusual one : «The creation of a state of hypnosis by act or demonstration on the air is prohibited and hypnosis as an aspect of «parlour game» antics to create humorous situations within a comedy setting cannot be used.»

Both the professional organizations for the broadcasting media accept that «Standards for broadcasting can never be final or complete. Broadcasting is a creative art and it must always seek new ways to achieve greater advances. Therefore any standards must be subject to change... Through this process of self-examination broadcasters acknowledge their obligation to the American family».

Both radio and television in the United States accept that they have a strong educational role. The television Code in particular states : «In order that television programming may best serve the public interest, viewers should be encouraged to make their criticisms and

positive suggestions known to television broadcasters. Parents in particular should be urged to see to it that out of the richness of television fare, the best programmes are brought to the attention of their children».

Yet, with the multiplicity of Codes and guidelines all of which express high-mindedness, it was still felt in recent years that something more was necessary. There had been a few media councils set up in different parts of the United States. These were small bodies, much more in line with the Consultative Council concept, than that of Press Councils on, say, the United Kingdom or the Nordic fashion. However they had the name.

In the first years of the 1970's this crystallized in the feeling that America should have a National Media Council. The initiative came in the end, neither from the government nor from the industry, but from the Twentieth Century Fund, a tax-exempt foundation which announced in December 1972 that it would itself establish a National Press Council «to receive, to examine, and to report on complaints concerning the accuracy and fairness of news reporting in the United States». Before making the announcement a Task Force appointed by the Fund examined the majority of existing Press Councils. It decided that it would confine its activities to complaints only against national newspapers and the electronic media, and not take on the general mass communications media of America ! Immediately newspapers, radio and television said that they would have nothing whatever to do with any such council and that they would not co-operate in any way. A massive anti-Press Council campaign was mounted. Associated Press and United Press International said they would reply to queries from the Council, but not respond in any other way. The *Christian Science Monitor*, however, welcomed the Council and so did the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, whose Chairman Barry Bingham served on the Task Force. The *Columbia Journalism Review*, which has a world wide reputation as a «thinking» journal on communication studies, gave the idea a reasonable reception. In the March/April 1973 issue it stated :

«A free society cannot endure without a free press, and the freedom of the press ultimately rests upon public understanding of, and trust in, its work. The public as well as the Press has a vital interests in enhancing the credibility of the media and in protecting freedom of expression. One barrier to credibility is the absence in this country of any established national and independent mechanism for hearing complaints about the media or for examining issues concerning freedom of the Press». Later in its concluding paragraph it stated : «The national media council proposed will not resolve all the problems facing the print and broadcasting media, nor will it answer all of the criticisms voiced by the public and by politicians. It will, however, be an independent body to which the public can take its complaints about press coverage. It will act as a strong defender of Press Freedom. It will attempt to make the media accountable to

the public and to lessen tensions between Press and government. Any independent mechanism that might contribute to better public understanding of the media and that will foster accurate and fair reporting and public accountability of the Press must not be discouraged or ignored. The national media council is one such mechanism that must be established now...»

But at the end of the day, the *Columbia Journalism Review*, and even the Twentieth Century Fund, completely lost sight of the fact that all sections of the media of mass communications industry in the United States have, within their own hands, perfectly adequate, well-meaning if sometimes pious and pompous, Codes of Ethical Conduct. If these were followed it would make quite unnecessary the establishment now or at any time of further mechanization of control or accountability. Where, therefore, does the fault lie ? Is it in the Codes of Ethics themselves that they are not precise enough ; that they are not mandatory ; that though the people drafting them may have been well-intentioned the various groups to whom they are intended to apply take only a cynical even hypocritical view of them ? In the summary at the end of our country survey, what has happened in the United States of America and in Australia, where an abundance of voluntary Codes of Ethics has proved to be insufficient, is taken as an argument that it is only where such Codes are mandatory and where infringement carries some economic penalty, that they are observed.

## 7. VENEZUELA

In Latin America, one of the best professional Codes of Ethics for journalists has been adopted by the Venezuelan Association of Journalists. Possessing a strong social influence, this code contains the following principles :

- Journalism is a service which should guarantee the social right to information. The journalist is obliged to fight for the respect of truth ; social justice ; the rights of man ; the ideals of perfecting society ; peace between peoples and the application of the right to information and the right of opinion.
- In order to guarantee these rights, the journalist will fight to participate in the elaboration of the politics of information and writing about the means of information in his place of work.
- The journalist should give his support to his colleagues when they are being unjustly persecuted or are victims of acts violating the established law or from all other forms of provoked repression or the defence of the freedom of the press.
- No journalist, even when he is carrying out activities outside his profession, should invoke, apply or justify the application of current legal dispositions which might be injurious to the freedom of expression and information.

- The journalist will not accept coercion from his employers to alter the truth and he is obliged to denounce any acts of coercion, groups or people who would prejudice or violate these norms.
- The journalist cannot, for any reason, receive any sort of remuneration from a public or private entity that he is serving professionally, if this has an effect on professional morale.
- The journalist must rectify mistaken information after confirmation of the error committed and provide the means for the right to reply or re-establish the persons or institutions concerned.
- The journalist must respect professional secrets.
- The journalist cannot divulge information on private lives, other than those having importance for the interests of the community.
- In no case should he pander to sensationalism or superficiality.

## C – ASIA AND OCEANIA

### 1. AUSTRALIA

Australia is one of those countries of which it is possible to say that it is «over-policed» by Codes of Ethics. Too many Codes of Ethics may well be just as bad as too few. This is especially so if the majority of those Codes come from within the industry, and are administered from within, with little or no lay participation and with a certain amount of mutual hostility and incompatibility. They can become far too introspective. The lay complainant can often be so bewildered about where and how to seek redress, that he ends up by doing nothing, suffering consequential frustration.

Because of Australia's size, her speedy development and the technical sophistication of her communications structure, the continent has a multiplicity of professional and commercial organizations connected with various aspects of the media of communications, matched only by the United States of America.

Each media organization seems to have drawn up and adopted to administer its own Code of Practice. Some of these organizations are more professionally oriented than others which are openly commercial so that their Codes deal with rates of payment, contracts and the principles of business transactions, with little more than a passing reference to any higher ethical responsibility to the public at large.

This predominant self-interest, combined with the lack of lay participation and lay understanding, has led during recent years to strong external demands for an Australian Press Council. Opposition to the idea from within the industry has been violent, but in the end such a Council has now been set up.

The initiative for the formation of the Australian Press Council came from the Australian Government. In 1975, the then Minister for the Media (the Hon. Dr. Moss Cass) invited proprietors to discuss with him ideas borrowed from the United Kingdom.

His proposals were for a body with 21 members, seven nominated by the main newspapers; three by the Australian Journalists' Association (of which more anon) and ten from the public appointed by the Chairman (himself to be a lay-man) from trades unions, consumer associations, the Law Council and the Council for Civil Liberties.

The headspring of all the Codes of Ethics, Charters of Practice, ect. set up within the industry in Australia can fairly be taken as the Code of Ethics of the Australian Journalists Association. From it have grown other Codes drawn up to meet the specific needs of separate and specialist classes of journalists (news broadcasters, radio and television script writers, producers, etc.) which could not have been anticipated at the time the original was created. Though these organizations recognize the over-riding authority of the Australian Journalists Code, it is arguable that it might have been better to amplify and up-date the first and original Code to meet new needs as the communications industry itself developed and evolved, rather than that each section should have its own. Many of the points covered in each one are but duplicates of points covered by the others, though the phraseology may be different. Such changes can also lead to confusion or at best give cause for arguments about interpretation. None of the Codes has developed in any remarkable or original form; they are all derivative. Though the different Codes vary in their approach to what might be called the mechanical presentation of news, none takes into account latter-day changes in the philosophy of news-gathering or dissemination, nor of change in public opinion about what is considered acceptable and what is not. All the Codes show their years and by now are little more than guidelines. If there is any moral or lesson to be drawn it is that like a language, an Ethical Code must be a living and an evolving thing. It cannot be static. Secondly, what happened in Australia seems to go to show that the existence of a multiplicity of voluntary Codes, however admirable each one may be of itself, is no guarantee that they will achieve what they set out to accomplish.

The Australian Journalists Code (see Appendix) has often been criticized because its terms are too general and too imprecise to enable anyone to define exactly what constitutes mal-practice. It does, however, have one merit over most others, its procedures for dealing with complaints alleging its violation, and the final punishments for anyone found guilty of violation are quite definite, albeit very seldom applied. It does not allow for lay representation on the body dealing with complaints.

The fact that so many organizations have felt it necessary to produce their own Codes of Practice and also that it has been necessary to create a Press Council at the peak of the pyramid above everything else, does indicate that over-generalization can lead to insufficiency and that more precise definitions and well-organized channels of communication within the communications industry itself, are often necessary. The new Australian Press Council does not, in any way, consider itself to be a duplication of existing ethical controls, but to have the task of setting up completely new standards.

The Australian Broadcast Commission has taken the Australian Journalists' Association Code as the starting point for its own, but found it necessary to amplify each of the main eight clauses, even where they deal with general journalistic principles and then add some specific electronic journalism guidelines of its own for good measure. Broadcasting does have an argument for special pleading, because it has to reconcile the fundamental differences which exist between commercial ventures like newspapers and the responsibilities of an independent national body such as a Broadcasting Authority. Though a broadcasting authority may be, as its name implies, independent of the State, if it has been created by the State in the first instance it often feels that it must show itself to be ultra-independent. This has led such broadcasting authorities from time to time to appear to be running counter to the State for no apparent reason. Moreover, such bodies often do feel that they have extra responsibilities to observe and functions to discharge to the community which they serve, functions which commercial newspapers can and do happily ignore, particularly in the field of information and education.

In its preamble to its news directives, the Australian Broadcasting Commission points out that it is a public authority created under the Australian Broadcasting and Television Act of 1942, but that it is not government-owned nor government-operated. It is responsible for its own administration and for the preparation of its own radio and television programmes, though not for maintaining their on-air transmission. That is done by the Government's General Post Office. This division of responsibility is a matter over which there are differing opinions. In any country where the government retains the ultimate control over powers of transmission it can in a state of emergency give a dictatorship the supreme power over an important propaganda machine. Newspapers, even if they are taken over, still need considerably more manning and distribution and are more susceptible to sabotage than a radio transmitting station. In fact the history of latter-day revolutions has shown that taking over control of the air waves is, when possible, the first activity of the revolutionaries. In time of peace and normality, the separation of the programming activity from transmission can act as a protection against interruption of broadcasts through industrial action on the

part of employees of the programming company. However these are merely general points and are not relevant to the discussion of the position in Australia as it is at present.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission is statutorily commanded to broadcast, daily, regular news and information sessions about current affairs within the Commonwealth and other parts of the world.

This duty has been authoritatively defined :

«Our aim is to broadcast and televise news essentially as a service to the people. We do not accept the news values of the popular Press. We do not use news solely for its sensational interest.

«Our aim is to provide news of which the people ought to know if they are to take their place as intelligent members of the community. We must be factual, objective, impartial and balanced, and always in good taste».

The directives go on to define, for instance, how crime news should be handled ; the procedure for complaints, errors and corrections ; guidelines on the longevity of news stories, etc.

It is so specific on practically every item on which there could possibly be contention that little further is needed, though there are dispute procedures for listeners and staff alike if anyone feels aggrieved.

The Writers and Producers Guild and the Producers and Directors Guild are concerned with script writers and others who undertake creative work for radio, television, the cinema and the stage. They deal with terms of employment, contracts, copyright, etc., but they also claim as two of their objectives, the highly moral, but nonetheless delightfully vague aims :-

«To promote and protect the professional interests in Australia of all creators and adapters of material for stage, radio and television and the screen».

«To represent and endorse a professional standard of writing for the stage, radio, television and screen».

## 2. BANGLADESH

Soon after the country gained its independence, the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists adopted a Code of Ethics based upon that of the International Federation of Journalists. For a time a great deal was done by way of training at the Press Institute of Bangladesh, and there was a mood of considerable optimism over the future development of the Press and its general sense of responsibility.

The take-over of the Bangladesh Press by the Government in 1976 and the closing down of all but four of the country's national papers put an end to that sort of development. Now, under the «Second Revolution» the Press is being reorganized as a disciplined instrument for

instructing and guiding the population, and therefore there is neither room nor need for many of the clauses found in western-style Codes of Ethics. However, there remains need for agreement between the journalists' organization and the government on matters of employment and security of employment. These are matters which are still under discussion.

### 3. BURMA

Burma was the first of many countries to elaborate a Code of Ethics and to create a Press Council. The Code of Press Ethics contains the following principles :

1. The Press will do all in their power to ensure that the information imparted by them to the public is factually accurate. They will check before publishing all items of information to the best of their ability. No facts are to be wilfully distorted or essential facts deliberately suppressed.

2. The right of the individual for protection of his reputation and integrity shall be respected. Publicity that violates the sanctity of privacy shall be avoided, unless it is deemed necessary in the interest of the public.

3. If and when an inaccurate or false piece of information is published, the paper concerned shall correct it at the earliest opportunity, giving the correction due prominence on the same page as the earlier incorrect information.

4. News reports shall be strictly separated from opinion. The opinion of a writer may only be included in the news story when it carries his by-line.

5. Discretion must be observed concerning sources of information. Professional secrecy must also be observed in all matters revealed in confidence.

6. In reporting crime stories it must be solemnly observed that the accused is innocent until he is found guilty by a competent court of law.

7. The personnel of the Press must never accept any form of bribe or permit personal interest to influence their sense of justice and impartiality.

8. Newspapers shall not deliberately or calculatedly incite religious or racial hatred or subject any race, religion, or nationality to unjust criticism.

9. Nothing shall be published that will endanger the security, stability, and sovereignty of the Union.

10. Commercial announcements or advertisements in the form of news articles, pictures, and features must be published in such a way as to leave no doubt that they are commercial announcements or advertisements.

11. The following are to be avoided in any form of publication, such as, articles, news items, or photographs, etc.,

- (a) Immorality or obscenity ; (b) Use of vulgar expressions ; (c) Malicious imputations ; and (d) False and defamatory statements.

### 4. HONG KONG

In Hong Kong there are virtually no restrictions on what is published and equally virtually no protection for journalists nor for readers. The Hong Kong Journalists' Association has for some time been concerned at the position and particularly at the low level of professionalism and the malpractices of so many self-styled journalists. There is no Media Council in Hong Kong, but the Journalists' Association is affiliated to the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists ; the Australian Journalists' Association ; the New Zealand Journalists' Union ; and the Newspaper Guild in North America. It has recruited some 600 members and drawn up a Code of Ethics which it frankly regards as only the starting point. The Code borrows much from the Australian Journalists' Association's Code.

The Manila-based Press Foundation of Asia (see the Philippines) has recently moved into the Hong Kong scene, chiefly because Hong Kong, despite many of its deficiencies, is a major «listening post» for that part of the globe. It shares with Singapore the role of the Far East operational centre of most international magazines, news agencies, etc. Commercial radio and commercial television interests are particularly strong in Hong Kong, and here too there is ample scope for improvement in general ethical standards.

### 5. INDIA

At the time of compilation (late 1977) the position in India regarding the India Press Council and the legal status and application of various professional Codes is uncertain. Mass communicators in India are actively engaged in the restoration and re-application of free communication principles which were in operation before the State of Emergency led to a number of restrictions and changes.

It is possible, however, to look back into the history of mass communication in India and to say that India was the one country where the ethical and general philosophy of mass communication was the most highly developed and sophisticated in the developing Third World.

Various Press and broadcasting organizations and institutes, a flourishing Press Council and schools of journalism and academic studies of the media in universities had a strong effect upon the way in which mass communication media functioned. There were many declarations about the professional duties and responsibilities of media communicators, and one of the more significant was that of the Indian Federation of Working Journalists made in Ahmedabad in 1971 :

«We the working journalists of India, declare that the objectives of the profession of journalism are closely related to the wider social objectives to which the nation is pledged. These objectives include the achievement of

a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of national life. The Press have to function as an integral part of a just social order, in which people have a vital interest. Working journalists pledge themselves to maintain an integrated social outlook, to keep in mind the larger interests of the people and to work always with a sense of social responsibility.

«With this in view working journalists shall reflect faithfully the urges and aspirations of the People, especially the under-privileged sections of society, who are fighting against vested interests, and they shall report with understanding and with sympathy their struggle for a better life. For this, working journalists shall strive without fear or constraint. Towards this end, journalists shall work for a complete reorganization of the newspaper industry so that the Press is brought closer to the People and made a fit instrument of social change to which Parliament and the people are committed».

The Press Institute of India, the All-India Editors' Conference, the Indian Newspaper Society and other journalists' groups, continue although the India Press Council, which they combined to set up in 1965, has now been dissolved. Its functions and a number of other controls of the Press are now exercised through government legislation to prevent the publication of matters which the government considers to be objectional.

Although it may now be only of academic interest, the Ethical Code of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, drawn up in Bombay in 1947, also at a time of crisis, is worthy of consideration.

Its first clause, for instance :

«All editorial comments, expressions of opinion whether through statements, letters to the Editor, or in any other form shall be restrained and free from scurrilous attacks against leaders or communities, and there shall be no incitement to violence».

The specific inclusion of «Letters to the Editor» in this clause is interesting. In some countries Letters to the Editor are textually sacrosanct, albeit that they are used by many as a common form of personal attack, limited in expression only by the laws of libel, contempt, or obscenity.

The Code also enjoins editors to use the greatest caution «in the selection and publication of pictures, cartoons and poems, etc.»

In some of the western countries far greater licence is considered acceptable in cartoons and poems than in written news and features. In France, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany, there is a tradition extending over a couple of centuries of using the cartoon and the poem as a particularly sharply pointed weapon with which to lampoon one's opponents. Things have been implied in cartoons which would never be tolerated if spelled out in words. The United King-

dom Press Council, for instance, has allowed more licence (codified as «a matter for editor's discretion») over the subjects and use of cartoons than it has over written matter.

## 6. INDONESIA

The Press Council of Indonesia is not a disciplinary body in the generally accepted sense. It is part of the government's Ministry of Information and advises the government on the issue of licences to print and to publish newspapers (two different things) and also to import newsprint together with various newsprint subsidies.

The Journalists' Association has a Code of Ethics, adopted in 1968, but it is a formal document with little relevance to the newspaper scene in Indonesia as it is operated at the present time. The Association controls the licensing of journalists.

## 7. JAPAN

Japan, which now has the largest and most profitable mass media complex in the world, also has one where voluntary control and discipline is most successful. More than any other country, Japan demonstrates that if there really is a genuine and deep-seated desire to make self-discipline work it can be done. Japan is not a country which pays lip-service to its Press Council or Code of Ethics. They are taken seriously. In consequence, Japanese newspapers are completely free ; the liberty of the Press is guaranteed by the constitution ; there are no newspaper laws and no system of registering newspapers nor of the reporters who work on them.

The key to Japan's success is the organization *Nihon Shinbun Kyokai*, financed from within the industry, the largest and probably the most efficient Media Council in the world.

It covers the activities of newspapers, news agencies and broadcasting and works closely with the Motion Picture Moral Code Committee. It deals with advertising, as well as editorial content.

*Nihon Shinbun Kyokai* is now a quarter of a century old. It works basically on a set of Canons of Journalism to which all its members subscribe, and its final sanction infringement is expulsion, though this is very rarely applied.

The Secretariat of the *Nihon Shinbun Kyokai* has a staff of veteran journalists who every day examine the entire content of all the newspapers published by member organizations throughout Japan.

Stories, photographs or advertisements which violate the Code are cut out, filed and classified. They are then submitted to the appropriate monthly meetings of the Editorial Committee, which has some 50 members drawn from the industry — not laymen be it noted. If the Committee considers that anything in any way



violates the Code, a warning is sent to the newspaper concerned. If the newspaper does not heed the warning, it is then referred to the Directors of Nihon Shinbun Kyokai.

A great deal of research and study into the ethical side of mass media operations is also undertaken by this organization, which has a separate study group operating in this field.

Surprisingly the Canons of Journalism, which come under six heads — sphere of news reporting and editorial writing ; the principle of editorial comment ; impartiality ; tolerance and decency ; guidance ; responsibility and pride, are not in themselves excessively long (see Appendix).

There are several sub-clauses which are models in themselves, e.g.

Sphere of news reporting etc. sub clause 3 : «In treating news one should always remember and be strictly on guard against the possibility of such news being used for propaganda purposes»

Sub Clause 4 : «Criticism of persons should be limited to such as that which could be made direct in the face of the persons involved» .

In outlining the principles which should govern editorial comment, it is stated :

«the writer should maintain the public spirit of being a speaker for those who otherwise have no means of voicing their opinions» .

There is, of course, the right of correction and the obligation that «those who are to be criticised should be given the opportunity to defend themselves» .

On responsibility there is the statement :

«The principal difference between newspapers and other commercial enterprises is that newspapers in their reportorial and editorial activities exercise great influence over the public. The public chiefly depends on newspapers as the source of information and the basis of their judgement of public events and problems. From this distinction arises the public character of journalistic enterprises and the special social status of journalists. The realization of their responsibility and pride by journalists is fundamental in ensuring their special status. These are points which must be observed by each individual journalist» .

## 8. REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Korea has had a Press Ethics Commission since the early 1960's but in its first few years it confined itself to acting upon complaints raised by those whose interests or prestige were harmed by newspaper articles.

This was broadened in 1964, to consider any complaints against anything carried by newspapers or news agencies, whether brought by individuals or by the Deliberative Office which had by then been set up to study the performance of the Press and news agencies in this context.

The move to set up the Press Commission came, in the first place, from the newspaper industry and it followed the guidelines of the International Press Institute of Zurich.

The Code of Ethics divides into four main parts, and it adopts mainstream thinking for such codes.

The first part deals with reporting and comment and the necessity to keep separated fact from opinion, and ensures that newspapers, when they have published false information, shall «correct it immediately, voluntarily and completely» which is a neat and unequivocal statement.

Under the heading of «Independence», there are a couple of clauses of interest, one of which reads :

«News items which might be detrimental to the healthy development of society should not played-up in order to satisfy the curiosity of the public. In particular public morals should not be depraved by exaggerated reporting of obscenity and other immoralities» .

The other deals with the prohibition of inciting religious hatreds and goes on to say :

«... And no race or nationality should be subject to unjust insult or criticism by newspapers. In particular, the honour of Heads of State, either of our own nation or of foreign ones, should be respected» .

The section which deals with the manner in which newspapers shall regard personal honour, etc. is also worthy of note :

«The inclusion in articles of vulgar expressions or of unjustified attacks against holders of public office or against institutions and groups is prohibited» .

«... public interest and public curiosity must be clearly distinguished» .

«Names and pictures of juvenile suspects, juvenile defendants or assaulted women, should not be published» .

And there is a clause which is worthy of being given in full, the first portion of which in some countries might cause considerable opposition, though the second half is exemplary. The mandate in the first part of the clause could conflict with the assumption that provided views and opinions are clearly credited, newspapers etc. are entitled to a degree of bias. How much space should, for instance, a Roman Catholic newspaper give to Protestant views and opinions ; or a strongly Right Wing political newspaper give to the views etc. of the extreme Left. The clause reads :

«For the protection of personal freedom, newspapers must carry views and opinions which may be contradictory with those of the newspaper itself. Space must be given to any person who has been criticized, for his defence» .



And finally under the heading of Dignity there is a clause which demands adequate salaries and respect, etc. for journalists, and one other which has a unique point built-in. It reads :

«In the process of news-gathering, the reporter must act correctly towards individuals or institutions and groups with whom he may be concerned. The journalist should protect those who provide news. He should not promise that interviews will be published. If he has given an assurance that a conversation will not be published, the promise should be kept unless it is absolutely necessary in the public interest to publish. The journalist should protect the secrecy of his source and should do so even after he retires from the profession».

## 9. MALAYSIA

There is an extensive newspaper structure of Malaysia – English language, Chinese, Tamil, etc. Though there was at one time a strong and independent Malay Media Council with its own guidelines, government ordinances of 1974 now lay down their own strict rules. The Government licences newspapers and can renew or refuse to renew annually. It has also reduced outside financial support and other forms of control.

The general principle of the Government's guidelines is that of support of the ruling party, but it is only fair to say that within those limits the Press has considerable freedom, more in the presentation of hard news, and perhaps less in the sphere of comment.

The general ethical standards of the Malay Press are high and the voluntary Code is observed.

## 10. NEW ZEALAND

The New Zealand Press Council and the New Zealand Code of Ethics are modelled on the British Press Council and the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists. In New Zealand both are voluntary and both confine their activities to print journalism.

Of any country's ethical code studied that for the New Zealand Journalists Union is the briefest. It just states that members are required to observe the following :-

1. To report and interpret the news honestly.
2. To promote, through their conduct, full public confidence in the integrity and dignity of their calling.
3. To observe professional secrecy in matters revealed in confidence to the furthest limits of law or conscience.
4. To use only honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
5. Never to accept any form of bribe, either to publish or suppress.
6. To reveal their identity as members of the Press when not to do so would be contrary to ethical standards.
7. No to suppress essential facts, and not to distort the truth by omission or wrongful emphasis.

8. To observe at all times the fraternity of their profession and never to take unfair advantage of a fellow member of the New Zealand Journalists Association.
9. To accept no compulsion to intrude on private grief. Broadcast journalists, in so far as they are invariably members of the New Zealand Journalists Union, also accept these guidelines. However radio and television have separate codes which in essence differ very little from those of other countries, and in particular from those operating in neighbouring Australia.

## 11. PAKISTAN

Pakistan is going through a difficult period in respect of its Press and the question of Press Freedom. There has been a number of strikes and upheavals, regulations and counter-regulations.

A National Press Trust was created by the Government in 1972 which set about adapting the United Nations International draft Code of Ethics (1952). After stating the normal guidelines about integrity on reporting, fair presentation of news, etc., the Press Code of Ethics for Pakistan went on to say :

«The Press shall not publish news or comment, photographs or advertisements, which may undermine the security of the state or the solidarity of the nation».

«In reporting proceedings of the national and provincial Assemblies such portions of the proceedings as the Speaker may have ordered to be expunged from the records of the Assembly shall not be published and every effort shall be made to give the readers a fair report of what has been said by all sections of the House».

«In dealing with any situation the Press shall restrict itself to factual reporting of events without in any way encouraging or providing any form of disturbance».

«No newspaper shall accept in any form or shape any financial and pecuniary advantage or obligation from or on behalf on any foreign country or concern».

The Code has been rigidly applied.

More recently Pakistan's Federal Union of Journalists has objected to the severity with which the Code has been administered, and has called for the dismantling of the National Press Trust and its reconstitution on different lines, with a new and freshly drafted Ethical Code.

One of the aims of the Journalists' Federation is to secure a return to free movement of journalists abroad. There have been occasions when permission to travel abroad has not been given, despite the United National Charter.

Radio Pakistan and the Pakistan Television Corporation were also recognized at the same time as the formation of the National Press Trust.

It may well be some time before the relationship between the Pakistan Journalists Federation and the Pakistan Islamic Republic settles down to a workable norm and a mutually agreed Ethical Code and set of guidelines are formulated.

## 12. PHILIPPINES

There have been several Presidential Decrees regarding the media, and in May 1973 the Government set up a Media Advisory Council, which replaces all previous similar bodies.

It started off by averring that «it is the objective of the Government to help in the sound development of the mass media to the end that they will become an effective instrument in the attainment of social change».

The document setting up the Advisory Council went on to say that the mass media had, in 1972, (the previous year) admitted its inability to institute a self-regulatory system to prevent corruption and abuse. But then it appeared that the time was «opportune» for there to be a Media Advisory Council which could recommend applications for newspaper, magazine or broadcasting networks and which could take over the functions of the defunct Philippine Press Council.

Many of the Advisory Council's functions were not, however, to be vastly dissimilar from those of its predecessor, particularly its guidelines about the dissemination of government information. The passing on to readers, listeners and viewers of information about agricultural production, consumer price indices and general government news in themselves can be matters which it is not unseemly for a country under stress to require of its media. Of more concern is the manner in which it may be enforced.

## 13. SINGAPORE

There is no overall Media Council and no overall Code of Ethics, but the Singapore National Union of Journalists follows very broadly the guidelines of the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists. The newspapers have not, until recently, been subject to any form of strict control, but latterly a number of excesses and a critical line towards the administration of the Republic have led to some stringent measures being taken to make the newspaper industry, particularly the Chinese and the English language Press, be more conformist.

## 14. SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is in many ways a microcosm of the whole of the Indian sub-Continent. Until a few years ago the Press and Press Freedom standards in Sri Lanka were among the highest in Asia, and on a par with those of India.

At the beginning of 1973, the Government passed a Press Council Law and set up a Press Council of its own, which in effect is a two edged weapon. It is something which can be used for the Press and also turned against it. And the latter has been the use to which the Sri Lanka Press Council has been most frequently put.

The Bill states that the objects of the Press Council shall be :

1. To ensure the freedom of the Press in accordance with the highest professional standards.
2. To ensure that newspapers shall be free to publish as news, true statements of fact, and any comments based upon true statements of facts.
3. To ensure the maintenance by newspapers and journalists of high standards of journalistic ethics and a due sense of both the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
4. To advise the government on any matters pertaining to the regulation and conduct of newspapers.»

Membership of the Press Council is at the direction of the government and when spelled out in detail it is clear that one of its functions shall be «to prevent the publication or discussion, not only of official secrets, but also of matters relating to the discussions and decisions of the Sri Lanka Cabinet, without the approval of the Secretary to the Cabinet».

## D – AFRICA AND ARAB STATES

### 1. ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Egypt not only has a sophisticated set of Codes of Honour to cover newspapers, journals and broadcasting, but its disciplinary machinery is also strict. It includes suspension ; and if a journalist attempts to work while suspended, his name can be removed from the professional register entirely. He will then have to seek work outside the media complex. As media work in Egypt is well-paid, this could be a real economic hardship.

Though Egypt is a Muslim country the Codes stress the importance of religious freedom and tolerance. This is particularly emphasized in the Charter of Honour of the Radio and TV Union. Neither on radio nor TV must anything be done which would devalue the national heroes, alive or dead ; nor anything which could destroy national ideals. For instance, one of the less usual prohibitions to find in any Code or set of guidelines is that against the advocacy of divorce as a solution to family problems. The Codes throughout are strongly idealistic and nationalistic.

The Charter for the Press is interesting because of the philosophy expressed in its preamble. «We Egyptian journalists, believing in the positive role played by the national Press throughout the long struggle of the Egyptian people, by giving expression to its aspirations, sharing its sufferings, and supporting its great movement for liberation from all forms of exploitation and oppression, are convinced that the Press should continue to fulfil the constructive mission it has shouldered in its march alongside the Revolution of July 23rd, 1952, supporting its political and social endeavour and protecting its progressive achievements in the service of Egypt and the Arab masses and its promise of fulfillment of their legitimate hopes and aspirations ; emphasizing the importance and the seriousness of the responsibility of the Press to be a true mirror of society, and a source of guidance and leadership in the service of the basic principles formulated by the Egyptian people in its long struggle for liberation, firmly believing that the Press should remain, by truth alone, a weapon in the hands of the people, that its freedom can only exist with the people's support and as an extension of their freedom, and that it should serve the interests of the working masses as expressed in their solidarity within the Arab Socialist Union, state that :

«The Ethics of journalistic work are not a function of good performance alone, but derive primality from the honourable objective served by the published word. The word which is not committed to the service of our people's progress is a word devoid of honour, and the honour of commitment in press work can only be achieved when the work is a conscious choice, independent of all kinds of tutelage, censorship, orientation and containment».

The Declaration goes on to itemize a number of strict guidelines for journalists and then to state that... «in order to enable journalists to respect the commitments they have taken upon themselves they can demand certain freedoms in return...»

Included among the guidelines are all the normal ones, though even some of these have been hardened in several respects. Among those not usually found in guidelines, however, are such clauses as :

«To regard spiritual values as an essential component of the cultural and intellectual heritage of the Egyptian people, and as a motive force for its struggle».

«The promotion of world peace in line with the United Nations Charter and international conventions and agreements».

The commitment not to try to obtain information or facts by any other than legitimate means includes : «abstention from publishing doubtful information, misrepresenting correct information, attributing words

or deeds to any person or party without adequate verification, or adding statements to those made by any person or party without his or her authorization».

The Code requires that journalists «also adhere to the obligation not to publish the names or photographs of minors accused or arraigned for trial, so as to protect their future careers and facilitate their reformation and return to the fold of society. Publication by the papers of crime news shall also avoid sensational and exaggerated reporting».

«To undertake not to publish the photographs of non-public figures on other than public occasions without their prior agreement».

To accept a «full commitment to publish on request from the party concerned, corrections to previously published information, without prejudice to the right of the journalist concerned to comment thereon, in explanation of his point of view on the subject».

«It shall be imperative to ensure complete disassociation of writing activities from public activities. We hereby state, therefore, our commitment not to engage in publicity work».

«A full commitment to guard professional secrets and reject any pressure to divulge them, it being clearly understood that the secrets kept by any journalist are an integral part of professional secrets which cannot be revealed».

In return for these and other actions, the Press shall have :-

«Clear definition of the relationship between Press institutions and the Arab Socialist Union... the Press shall be a true statement of expression for all the working masses, without domination or control, being obliged only to adhere to the general political line of the Arab Socialist Union. No position of leadership in the Press shall be occupied by anyone against whom socialist measures have been taken in compliance with the will of the working masses or in confirmation of their rights.

«Non-interference by the Executive and Administrative authorities in the direction, orientation, or administration of the Press, whether this interference be through the imposition of direct censorship on the Press, issuing instructions of any kind thereto, or in any other forms. Such interference shall be regarded as a violation of the rights of the working classes.

«Full respect of the Law regulating disciplinary measures for Journalists. Journalists shall not be discharged, transferred to non-journalistic jobs, demoted, barred from performing their work in any way or subjected to any penalty except within the framework or the Law of their Syndicate and by the authority designated to take disciplinary measures provided for in that Law. Consequently, no outside authority shall interfere in the affairs of journalists...»

«Elimination of all obstacles and restrictions barring journalists from access to external sources of information, by making these sources available and removing, for the benefit of journalists, the censorship imposed on foreign newspapers and periodicals».

## 2. MALI

Mali is one of the first African countries to have adopted professional ethical norms from the beginning of their access to independence. In effect, it was by a decree published in August 1961 that the Statute of Journalism was adopted in Mali. The principles of professional ethics are formulated in the preamble of this decree as follows :

«Whereas the journalists of the Republic of Mali :

- take responsibility for all they write ;
- count as serious professional fault all calumny, accusations without proof, alteration of documents, deformation of facts and lies ;
- only recognize the authority of their sovereign peers in the way of professional honour ;
- only accept missions compatible with their professional dignity ;
- do not give themselves imaginary titles or qualities, or use unfair means to obtain information or take somebody by surprise ;
- do not accept money from a public service or enterprise where their quality of journalist, their influence or relations are open to exploitation ;
- do not accept any form of corruption.

«Whereas Mali journalists accept :

- not to put their names to commercial or financial articles ;
- not to commit any plagiarism ;
- to cite their fellows when they copy a text ;
- not to displace a colleague or provoke his dismissal by offering to work under inferior conditions ;
- to guard professional secrecy ;
- not to use freedom of the press in an interested manner.

«Whereas Mali journalists :

- revindicate freedom to publish information ;
- hold as priority rules scrupulousness and a sense of justice ;
- respect democratic principles of objectivity and freedom of expression ; also the duty of impartial information ;
- respect religious, political or philosophic convictions of the public which they are addressing.»

## 3. NIGERIA

The Fifth National Convention of the Nigerian National Union of Journalists, which met in Benin in 1970, adopted a Code the first item of which is :

«It is the primary duty of a journalist to tell and adore the truth».

There are also the following :

«The profession demands good appearance at all occasions. Therefore a journalist must always be properly and decently dressed».

«It shall be improper for a journalist to ridicule or treat a fellow journalist with contempt, be he a superior or a subordinate professional colleague».

«A bona fide journalist should not fraternize with fakes. Anyone who knows any of the fakes and does not expose him is guilty of professional misconduct».

The Nigerian Editors have a separate set of guidelines which are state-security oriented :

«We believe that the Press should refrain from publishing anything likely to undermine the loyalty and allegiance of any member of the Armed Forces».

«We believe that the Press should avoid the publication of news, comments, photographs or advertisements which tend to undermine the security of the state and the solidarity of the nation».

«We believe it is the duty of journalists to promote national unity ; to avoid news items or pictures capable of inciting one tribe against the other or of inciting religious hatreds or conflicts or making any section of the Nigerian community feel that they are second class citizens. News items calculated to promote peace and harmony and help in the maintenance of law and order should be given prominence and precedence over other news items».

«We believe that all editorial comments and expressions of opinion should be restrained and be free from scurrilous attacks against leaders of the community, and there should be no incitement to violence».

## 4. TANZANIA

In Tanzania, President Nyerere has appointed a Mass Media Committee which advises the ruling party on media matters and also issues guidelines to government-owned newspapers and radio. The newspapers, such as the capital city's 'Daily News' and 'Sunday News' are expected to run on a commercial basis as they did until they were nationalized in 1970.

A Charter issued in 1970 acts as a guideline for the managing editor and the Mass Media Committee.

## 5. TUNISIA

The preamble of the Tunisian draft Code of Ethics, elaborated in 1977, starts off :

«The mission of a journalist is to serve. This term does not imply for him any idea of servitude, but

expresses the wish, the willingness to render himself useful to the national community and humanity, and at the same time zealously keeping intact his independence and his pride....»

«It is legitimate that among other objects a journalist may serve a man, a group, a party, or a particular cause, so far as this service does not involve anything contrary to his own convictions and his dignity as a man and as a writer, but whatever be his special ends and whatever be the functions which he exercises in the Press the journalist must in every case serve the general interest, the truth and his profession».

These are high sounding aims, and so are those in the next paragraph :

«He will show himself in practice the servant of the general interest in making himself the promoter and defender of every good thing, material and spiritual, intellectual, political and moral, of which the protection is useful to the national community. He will extend this care in the international domain, taking care especially to facilitate intellectual understanding between people to make easier their access to ways of a true and just peace».

These ideals are amplified section by section, but the Ethical Code for Tunisia remains withall a highly altruistic subjective document, rather than a set of practical and functional guidelines.

As already stated, in the suggested draft codes now outlined those factors which have been shown to be the largest common denominators, have been given the greatest priority. Those which vary from country to country etc. have been given a lower profile.

What has emerged is that because there are certain irreconcilable factors, at least four sets of basic guidelines should be available for consideration. None of the wording is considered to be definitive. Allowances must be made for semantics or problems of translation.

These four sets of guidelines are intended to serve the needs of :

1. Draft Code accepted by the media in order to protect the consumer-readers, listeners and viewers ; secondary purpose to protect advertisers and others who buy the services of the media.
2. Draft Code to protect the working journalist, broadcaster or others directly concerned with the gathering, writing, processing and presentation of news and opinion.
3. Draft Code to protect editors and others who take full legal responsibility for what is published and broadcast.
4. Draft Code for acceptance by proprietors, shareholders and governments who are in a position of absolute control over any particular form of mass media communications activity, defining their responsibilities.

## Section four — Four Draft Codes

### 1. DRAFT CODE ONE :

To be accepted throughout the media of mass communications for the protection of the consumer-reader, listener, viewer ; and for the protection of the advertiser or others who enter into a commercial relationship with the media, in order that the media shall provide a communication service between them and the reader, the listener and the viewer.

1. Accepting that the communications media should always strive after truth and honesty, and that they should also make clear the sources of their information.
2. Accepting that the communications media should never leave the reader, listener, viewer in any doubt as to what is presented as fact and what is presented as opinion — the authority for opinion should always be given, so as to enable the consumer to exercise his/her own judgement as to credibility.
3. Accepting the fact that readers, listeners and viewers must have the right to reply to false and misleading

information. Where it is a question of interpretation, as distinct from fact, a different dimension enters, but nonetheless differences of opinion should be considered to merit open discussion and opportunities should be provided for this to occur.

4. Accepting that nothing should be presented as fact, news or as opinion solely for the commercial advantage of the medium concerned. There should be no introduction of commercial announcements disguised as news, fact or opinion into editorial columns or editorial broadcasts.
5. Accepting that no editorial material shall be linked with advertising, without it being made clear that is what is being done. In general, the practice of associating editorial and advertising is to be condemned and so is the practice of selling advertising space with the promise of any form of editorial mention or the promise of the suppression of any information which would be inimical to the interests of the advertiser. There should be no sponsorship or broadcast programmes where there can possibly be association between the broadcast material and the commercial

interests of the sponsors. That a programme is being sponsored should be the subject of a factual announcement to that effect, and nothing else.

## 2. DRAFT CODE TWO :

For working journalists, practising broadcasters and others, directly concerned with the gathering, writing, presentation and processing of news and opinion.

1. Recognition of the importance of striving always after truth, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
2. Avoiding the suppression of essential facts, particularly if in so doing the news is distorted or falsified or the opinion is deliberately misleading.
3. Respecting confidences and the guarding of sources of information, particularly when disclosure can put others at risk. But not using this to disguise the fact that sources of information are in fact non-existent, unreliable, inadequate or in other ways suspect. The respect of confidences and the guarding of sources of information places upon the communicator a special obligation to ensure that those sources do of themselves fulfill clause 1, i.e. the recognition of the importance of striving always after truth, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
4. Refusing to allow personal prejudices, personal interests (especially financial ones), to influence news presentation by inclusion, rejection or change of emphasis.
5. Refusing to accept gifts or bribes to influence the news.
6. Using only fair and honest methods to obtain information.
7. Disclosing identity as a newsman before obtaining information for subsequent publication in any form whatsoever.
8. Remembering that a journalist or broadcaster is a citizen of his country. His loyalty must therefore be to his country and he should not for monetary nor for ideological reasons use his position to undermine the authority of his own country.
9. Refusing to do anything directly or indirectly unfairly to deprive a colleague of the means of livelihood. While recognizing that there is no copyright in news, there should be no plagiarism.
10. Refusing where someone belongs to an ethnic, religious or any other minority group, to mention this fact in any harmful or pejorative sense, and only to use it, if it is an essential part of the news or opinion item concerned. Refusing to write or broadcast anything which is likely to create or increase racial, religious or minority group tension or intolerance. Refusing to bring the names of relatives (particularly if they occupy public positions) arbitrarily into news stories about people in trouble, just to add «colour» to a story.

## 3. DRAFT CODE THREE

For Editors, Broadcast Programme Directors, and others who are directly and legally responsible for what is published or broadcast.

1. Ensuring that every effort is made by those under their authority to provide for publication or broadcast only information which is factually accurate ; not wilfully distorted ; from which no essential facts have been suppressed. If necessary, withholding from hasty or immediate publication any item made up of half-facts, half-truths or material of doubtful authenticity, if adequate checking cannot be carried out in time.
2. Protecting the right of the individual to his good character and reputation and observing the fundamental rule that there must be an assumption of innocence until guilt is clearly proven ; respecting an individual's right of privacy in the terms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
3. Correcting immediately errors which have been made when the true facts are verifiable, and affording the right of reply (see France and «Le Droit de Réponse»).
4. Maintaining a clear identification always between news in the factual sense, and in opinion. The latter should always be credited to the person whose opinion it is. Furthermore, a clear distinction should always be maintained between what is news and opinion on the one hand and what is paid-for advertising on the other, including editorial-style advertising material.
5. Ensuring that when reporting controversial matters adequate opportunity is given to all sides for the expression of opinion.
6. Making sure that staff under their control are not required to engage upon personally humiliating assignments ; nor indirectly encouraging other persons (not in their employ) to engage in such practices by purchasing material so produced or in any way creating a market for such activity.
7. Refusing to practise what is known as «cheque-book journalism», i.e. the payment, often of large sums of money, to convicted criminals and others for their memoirs or for articles glamourising crime and the profits arising from wrong-doing.
8. Making sure that staff do not break embargoes properly entered upon and that staff are not required to use and attribute off-the-record briefings against their will.
9. Honouring any training obligations for staff which may be part of the contract of employment or a generally accepted part of the industry's structure. Accepting the broad principle of prior consultation with the staff on matters involving change of policy which relate to their work or terms of employment, and respecting whatever form of consultative machinery

nery is, after mutual agreement thereon, established either for the industry as a whole or in a particular section of it, or in an individual undertaking.

#### 4. DRAFT CODE FOUR

For Owners, Proprietors, Shareholders and Governments which have control over the media.

1. Accepting that the ownership of the means of mass-communication traditionally places certain moral responsibilities upon the owner, other than commercial profit-making or that in the case of government controlled newspapers, there must be a two-way flow of information and not ownership for the sole purpose of maintaining status quo and preventing opposition.
2. Accepting that where a newspaper or broadcasting organization operates in circumstances which give it a monopoly of communication, its obligations to the community are heightened. If there are no alternative sources of information, then people have no choice. The need to maintain objectivity ; to correct errors, to accommodate all shades of opinion, therefore is significantly greater in such circumstances. It must both be honoured and be seen to be honoured.
3. Accepting that where all newspapers in a country are government-owned ; where the government owns the national news agency ; where there is only state owned and controlled radio and television, the government must be prepared to allow the media to deal in fair and constructive criticism. The government should be prepared to publish all relevant information about its activities and policies whether favourable or unfavourable, and not to indulge in censorship nor in manipulating of public opinion by suppression, etc.
4. Accepting the principle that all Governments shall respect the position of Foreign Correspondents provided that they, in their turn, behave responsibly and do not attempt to undermine the authority of the host country. Information sources should be open without condition to all fully accredited foreign correspondents and nothing should be done to hinder their free movement about the country. Except under special emergency circumstances there shall be no censorship or outgoing material and no reprisals shall be taken against foreign correspondents for critical or unfavourable material published in their own countries but for which they were not responsible and over the use of which they had no control. Newspapers, broadcast authorities and Media Council, where they exist, should themselves be prepared to listen to complaints about critical or unfavourable material which has been published about other countries, and if it can be shown that the material was inaccurate, unfairly critical, or unjustly biased, then amends should be made.
5. Accepting the principle that where governments have control over such matters as import licences for newsprint, machinery, etc., or where newspapers and broadcast authorities need overseas currency for the proper performance of their responsibilities to the community, these governments shall not use their powers to bargain for favourable treatment. They should not seek favourable comment where favourable comment is not justified ; they should not seek to suppress criticism where criticism is justified ; they should not demand support for themselves and condemn support for an opposition party arbitrarily. Nor should they use the possession of those powers and the ability to grant or refuse licences, etc., as means of reprisal against newspapers or broadcast authorities when past conduct has not been in accord with what the government wished. Other means which come within the general principles of Codes of Ethics, Media Councils, etc. should be sought.
6. Accepting the fact that while it is right to have regard to the total financial viability of the newspaper or the broadcasting authority (especially if it is a commercial one) when operating within a free market, excessive profits should not be sought at the expense of the integrity or lowering of the ethical standards of what might be called the media's non-commercial and public-service output.
7. Accepting that high concentration of media outlets within a restricted ownership structure is undesirable and therefore avoiding as far as possible the creation of monopolies whether commercial, governmental or even by way of Trusts and Public Service Corporations, etc.
8. Accepting that it is wrong to glamourize crime, and the profits accruing from wrong-doing and exploitation, and therefore not holding up as in any way attractive or desirable that sort of life-style. What is commonly known as «cheque-book» journalism should not be practised, particularly the bidding for and the paying of high sums to convicted or self-acknowledged wrong-doers for their memoirs, etc., thus making crime and profits from it seem attractive and desirable.
9. Accepting that it is wrong for the media to incite disaffection in the armed forces.
10. Observing and respecting the needs of minorities living within a larger community, and not practising nor encouraging racial, religious or any other form of discrimination. Also accepting that it is right and proper to give equal employment and career structure opportunities to everyone irrespective of race, class, creed or sex.



PART TWO  
**MASS MEDIA COUNCILS**

**Section one : Mass Media Councils in Third World Countries**

Information is one of the main tools of development. It is, moreover, a tool with many uses, and like most other things in this world it is capable of being well-used or ill-used.

In considering information to be as important a development aid as food, health and shelter, it is well to recall right at the start of this study, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads :

«Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers».

Because of the rapid advances in the techniques of communication, information knows few frontiers, and it has taken on a universality undreamed of at the beginning of this century.

It is this very universality, desirable in itself because we are all of one race, which has brought its own problems. Those problems are felt particularly strongly within the Third World. Not the least of them is that of the quality of information. Communication of information, especially through the agency of the mass media, should never be left to chance. It is not something which just happens. It is not, and should not, be regarded as the monopoly of any section of the community whether the group be national, ethnic, religious, ideological, political or economic.

Communicators need a *raison d'être*. They need to hold before them always the fact that they are by the nature of their occupation helping to shape and to condition the minds of others. This is a responsibility and a trust which cannot be ignored. There has been a tendency to elevate what is often described as the impartiality of the news media to a higher and more authoritative role than is shown by examination of how this impartiality factor actually works in practice. Another concept which is often invoked by practitioners

in the field of mass communications is that of objectivity. The claims made for it seldom stand up to detailed analysis.

To return for a moment to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration and its opening sentence : «Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression», we must remember that the very «opinion» to which every man has the right to freely express, can only be formed on the basis of information. Although it is not the only way, the most important channel in the Third World through which opinion can be formed and expressed, is that of the mass media.

But it would be wrong to place over-emphasis in the Third World on terms such as freedom of the press, impartiality, objectivity and free flow of information, in relation to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration. These are words used and as often misused emotively by the mass communications media in the developed world. In the first place there is no such thing as freedom of the press, at least not in terms of absolute freedom. If the restrictions on the practice of mass communication are not political they are legal, or economic, or social, etc. They vary, but it is dishonest to deny that they exist. Similarly, the use of the term «objectivity» and «impartiality» in respect of the substance of the information communicated by the media does not, as already mentioned, bear too close an examination. The terms are often used by those who are in favour of the theory of the media's non-answerability for the effect of their actions upon the minds of those to whom they make communication. And there is a growing volume of thought which regards the concept of «the free flow of information» as outdated and as belonging to the nineteenth century. The Third World in particular, feels that the words «free flow» have little meaning for them when they take stock of the imbalance in the flow of information and the control exercised by the few powerful nations and international news organizations. The mass media of the developed countries have for long sheltered behind such terms in order to avoid having to consider

in too great detail the whole range of moral, philosophical and ethical principles which are involved in the practice of mass communication.

It is often said that the mass media only reflect the values which the people of any nation consider to be the most important. If this is accepted and a study is made of certain sections of the mass media, the inevitable conclusion is that there are large sections of the world where not much value is placed upon any of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In many Third World countries, the mass media are less likely to be reflecting the values which the people consider to be the most important, than the reverse, informing the people of the values which are most important for the nation and informing them of the processes of development and self-determination.

In the world as it is today, with all its complexities ; with rival economic and social systems, and opposing ideologies, Third World countries are faced with many difficulties and problems of choice. But they are also standing on the threshold of the future, with great opportunities opening up before them. Some Third World countries observing the ideological gulf between East and West, feel that it is so wide as to be incapable of being reconciled and therefore believe they must choose between the two, which way their future lies. They can see no compromise ; no middle way. But they should pause for a moment to consider that neither East nor West, in this great North-South dialogue, has the complete monopoly of truth nor total disinterestedness. The Third World countries themselves have more need than anyone of the provisions of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration. Their great opportunity lies in the fact that many of them have come but recently into the field of mass communications and have done so at a time when both of the philosophy and the practical forms of mass communication are in revolution. The Third World has the opportunity to take the best from both, and the opportunity to avoid the mistakes which both have made in the past.

East and West have a responsibility, jointly or separately, to make a positive contribution in this context and to help the Third World to a state of self-determination in the communications field. It is not enough to say that the ideologies of the East and West are so polarised that there can be no common ground, no coming together. A bridge may well be found through universal development of media councils and in the continued working towards the ultimate adoption and observance of a Universal Code of Ethics for the mass media of the world, the reality of which code is still a long way off.

Media councils, however, because they work best as national or regional bodies, can be set up easily and are not subject to the vagaries of international agreement, though it is nonetheless desirable that there shall be the maximum degree of friendly interchange and cross-fertilization between the media councils of different countries.

Before going into detail about the role of media councils in the Third World, it is as well to take a quick look at those already operating in the developed countries. It was there that media councils were first conceived and it is there that they have been functioning for the longest period. However, two things must be borne in mind. First, that most of them made mistakes to begin with and have changed and evolved over the years. The second is a cautionary note. Because the pattern and philosophy of mass communication in Third World countries are not the same as that in many of the developed countries, the media councils in those countries cannot and should not be just carbon copies of those in the developed world.

There are now some 50 media councils or similar organizations throughout in the world. Most of them are press councils concerned with the printed word, though a few include broadcasting as well. There is considerable variation among them as to their constitution and application. There is, however, this one common denominator. It is that where press councils have been set up primarily on the initiative of the media themselves, the guiding principle has been that they shall form a self-disciplinary court of honour with the chief sanction against «offenders» being condemnation by colleagues in public. This idea of self control comes from the fact that since mass communication media workers claim to be professionals they must observe the rules of behaviour as they are laid down by the majority within the profession. They must show that regard for and responsibility towards the community which membership of a privileged profession brings, especially when it expects credibility from readers and listeners and also to be able to make successful representations to governments and others in authority about anything which is felt to be restrictive of the proper carrying out of professional duties.

There is danger for media communicators in applying too closely the criteria of such professions as medicine and the law, which can control entry through examinations and which can disbar individuals from their practice. Communication is an essential part of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration and to be able to «receive an *impart* information and ideas through *any media*» requires that it must be open to everyone. Therefore the majority of media councils have stopped short with the sanction of public censure and gone no further, though a number of journalists' and broadcasters' associations or trades unions which on the one hand have the power of admission have felt unjustified in having also the power of expulsion. In some countries it is not possible to work as a communicator unless one is in membership of the appropriate association or union, so in such cases expulsion for misconduct can and does debar the communicator concerned from the ability to practise.

Where journalists, broadcasters, editorial or proprietorial groups or media councils have drawn up codes of

conduct or codes of ethics they have all had certain fundamental principles in common. The first has been that information is sacred, that there must be accuracy and that there must not be wilful distortion nor suppression. Second has been the importance of distinguishing between information and comment or opinion. Third has been that comment should be constructive and should try to serve the public interest and that where it is critical it should avoid calumny. All codes also have a clause enjoining the maintenance of professional secrecy and the respecting of confidences.

The demand for freedom of information is not new. It has been a recurrent theme down the ages and it is now enshrined as a Human Right. But within the last few years, there has been a growing feeling, spontaneously expressed the world over, that this freedom, unless used responsibly, conflicts with other rights, the infringement of which is not in harmony with maintaining the concept of the dignity of man. Article 12 of the same declaration which covers infringement of privacy, attacks upon honour and reputation, is a case in point. Article 12 says «everyone has the right of protection of the law against such interference and attack». But the law is often cumbersome, tedious and even inadequate when dealing with some forms of infringement under Article 12. This is particularly true of infringements by the popular sections of the mass media, especially when they can turn to Article 19 and plead justification. It has been said that these two articles in the Declaration are irreconcilable. This is not so, but communicators do need to exercise a sense of caution and responsibility whenever their activities might infringe Article 12.

The most generally accepted way of ensuring the fulfilment of this sense of responsibility has been by the establishment of Courts of Honour, Codes of Ethics and Media Councils. And most frequently they have been established by the media themselves and have been self regulatory and voluntarily accepted without the necessity for legal sanctions. Nonetheless, this has not prevented some countries from arresting and imprisoning communicators with or without trial, though this has more usually been for offences, real or alleged, against the authority of the government, than for any lack of responsibility in dealing with the affairs of private individuals.

Initially the growth in the number of media councils was slow. There was considerable reluctance to introduce any self-regulatory machinery and where media councils or courts of honour were set up it was in many instances self-defensive. A few years ago the position at the time was aptly summed up in an editorial in the United States magazine *The Editor and Publisher* which observed : «Newspaper editors and publishers will never stand in the way of organizing such councils, but very few will be prime movers in setting them up !». The history of the early councils shows this to have been true. They were a self-defence against pressures which came from two directions at once. In many countries there was

extensive lobbying from the working journalists and broadcasters. Both the International Organization of Journalists and the International Federation of Journalists have done their utmost in this direction, stressing the importance of the status of journalists and broadcasters ; their inherent personal responsibility in the information they were communicating ; and their need to be protected from pressures of all kinds, external and internal, which seek to force them to act against the dictates of their consciences.

Recently, the defensive and supportive role of media councils has been more freely recognized by media people, and this has led to greater acceptance of the idea of such councils and steps being taken to create more. It is therefore likely that in the next decade the number of media councils will increase considerably throughout the world and it is important that Third World countries should share in this growth. Some of the roles which were fulfilled in the early days of media councils are less applicable to those in Third World countries than to those in developed countries, but enough has been said in the foregoing brief outline of the history of such media councils to show that some of their functions are transferable or adaptable to Third World situations. It may be some time, for instance, before in the Third World there is need for the sort of complaints mechanism which entitled the ordinary reader of a newspaper who felt aggrieved with its performance, usually in terms of reportage of his own affairs, to seek redress which he could not otherwise obtain, through a media council. Performance of that role implies a large and diverse number of readers liable to feel strongly concerned about particular editorial items relating directly to reportage of their own affairs. At the present time most complaints against Third World newspapers would be likely to come from members of a smallish group, more often than not governmental, probably already well able to make their views known and felt in other ways. But media councils have become multi-faceted. Since they were the corporate conscience of the communicators they were able to act as independent mediators between the communicators, and such economic or political forces which were striving to exercise control over the media for their own ends. Researches, particularly into monopolistic trends have been additional activities. In these, and other ways which will be discussed later, media councils in Third World countries can help constructively in the development of national media of mass communication. They can be a corporate voice against those who wish to use the media to manipulate opinion ; they can help to preserve its fundamental purpose in terms of human rights and dignities, and they can encourage both corporate and individual self-determination.

In Third World terms especially, a media council can be seen as part of a country's overall plan of development. It can also be a bridge between the problems of media development in the Third World and the established

media in the East and in the West. It is true, of course, that in many Third World countries the problems facing the mass media are vastly different from those in either the East or the West, and there are aspects of media practise in both ideologies which are not necessarily correct for the Third World. There are also aspects of media councils and codes of ethics themselves both in the East and the West, which are not applicable to Third World operations. To be taken into any consideration about media councils and codes of ethics, is the question how and by whom they are set up ; especially how they are financed and whose interests it is predominantly required that they serve ? These questions will be dealt with later.

There are, however, a number of factors common to all media councils and codes of ethics throughout the world, which are as clearly applicable to Third World countries as much as to anywhere else. Whether it is in a Third World country or a developed one, for there to be mass communication there must be at least two groups, those who collect and initiate the communication and those who receive the information. The latter group, the recipients, can usually be subdivided also into two groups. The first group comprises those who actively need and seek the information and who can usually exercise some sort of value judgement about what they receive. They are also particularly concerned about the sense of responsibility and the integrity of the communicators. The larger this section of the community is, the more influence its members can bring to bear, through media councils and in other ways, to ensure the maintenance of the quality of the information communicated. The second group comprises those who passively accept what is communicated to them, without question. They need to be protected from lack of integrity and from irresponsibility on the part of the communicators. It is these of whom it is true to say that they are that section of the community who are the main target for those who wish to use the media for manipulation of opinion.

Just as there are these common factors, communicators throughout the world are faced with a number of common tasks — those of finding and researching information ; of evaluating its importance ; of putting it into comprehensible form for the recipients. This is the «information» which justifies «the right to freedom of opinion and expression... «and which people seek to receive and impart «through any media and regardless of frontiers».

Some degree of guidance, help or even control must be formulated in the pattern of collection and dissemination, otherwise chaos results. The degree of help or formulation is an area open to considerable debate. Discussion of it has at times led to suspicion and to acrimonious debate, particularly in the past as between East and West, and latterly as between North and South in the current dialogue about the New International Information Order and correction of the present imba-

lance in the flow outward of Third World information compared with the flood inward of developed world information.

Media councils, particularly in Third World countries, should of course primarily be seen as organizations of mediation and support, and only secondarily, if at all, as organizations of control and regulation. In that way they will themselves command more respect and authority, both inside their own country and in the larger world. To that end, they need to be able to ensure for and by the media of mass communication, the observance of a number of concepts. In a number of consultations and research projects undertaken by Unesco into codes of ethics for the mass media, the common factors have been isolated and they are listed at the end of this chapter.

These factors do not take into account, however, some of the special aspects of the operation of mass media in Third World countries, especially when seen in terms of the contribution to this role which can be made by media councils.

There was particular reference to the problems, though not in media council terms specifically, at the Fifth Conference of Heads of state a government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo from 16-19 August 1976. The conference noted with anxiety «The increasing gap between the capacities of communication of the non-aligned and the developed countries, this being the inheritance of their colonial past». It also said that this had created a state of passive reception of tendentious information which was often inadequate or distorted. «The most complete identification and assertion of their national and cultural identity require the rectification of this great lack of balance and urgent measures to ensure the largest possibilities of mutual co-operation in this new sphere».

There are two important barriers which have first to be overcome before there can be adequate «rectification of this great lack of balance». Both are basic to Third World countries. One is the lack of indigenous expertise and the other the lack of finance. In the field of mass communication the former, the lack of indigenous expertise, is coupled with the problem of inertia and the feeling that mass communication has not so far been a priority in development, and that indigenous communicators (journalists and broadcasters) are not as important to the future of their own countries as are doctors, economists, agricultural scientists, lawyers and academics. Communicators must be given their rightful status particularly by governments. The other is the question of inadequate finance, particularly in terms of export-import balance of payments and the place which mass communication can take among all the other contestants for a share in what money there is. This problem of finance is closely interrelated with the need for the New International Economic Order. It is in the interests of the media of mass communication to work all they possibly can towards its ultimate achievement, because its realization is part of their own life-line. Without the

New International Economic Order the New International Information Order is less likely to become a reality. The New International Information Order can help to bring the New International Economic Order to come to pass. Their interrelationship is as vital as that.

The Colombo Conference went on to say that «The non-aligned countries must achieve identification and assertion of their national and cultural identity by their own efforts, as well as by a more active co-operation on the bilateral, regional and inter-regional level and by the co-ordination of their activities within the United Nations and other international forums. It is particularly necessary for the non-aligned countries to strengthen their actual infrastructure and to take the maximum advantages of the scientific and technical progress achieved in this field, facilitating thus a more complete dissemination of objective information among their public as well as in the world, on the topics or events occurring in the non-aligned countries in the social, economic, cultural and other fields, as well as their increasing role in the international community».

Even if the Third World media were to seek to be financially successful and entirely self-supporting in terms of Western development and chose to aim at producing mere carbon copies of Western news media, time is not on their side. It would take many years to achieve this, and the people of the Third World do not want to wait so long, apart from the fact that the end result envisaged above is not what they want and is not in conformity with the aims of the Colombo Conference.

But media councils could be an important aid to achieving the aims of Colombo, particularly in terms of helping to solve the first of the two problems, that of inertia and failure to make mass communication a sufficiently important development priority. They cannot, however, of themselves solve the second problem, that of lack of finance. In few Third World countries can the media themselves afford to set up and run even on modest lines, their own media council. Developed countries such as Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, to name only a few, have media councils which find that their work is limited by lack of adequate finance. Where money comes only from within the newspaper industry the problem is most acute; where part of the money comes from this source and the balance is made up from government grants, there is the feeling that the integrity of the media council is compromised.

In Third World countries where newspapers and broadcasting are already government-owned, government-controlled and government committed, it is pertinent to ask not only who else but the government could provide the finances but also what additional purposes could a media council serve? When interposed between the government and the media, and this is the most extreme case which is likely to arise, a media council can place government control and risk of government manipulation at one stage removed. It can also be, if widely enough based, an important bargaining force with

the government and it can be supportive of the media, especially in those Third World countries where, despite a strong element of government control, the media already takes an independent line on many issues. It can also, as will be explained later in a more general context, intervene in matters of the right use of technological resources. Where newspapers and possibly broadcasting are either partially or fully in private hands, a media council can seek out and try to correct commercial exploitation particularly from overseas, since this is equally as dangerous as government manipulation, particularly in sociological terms. Both commercial and governmental exploitation of the media for ulterior purposes violates the spirit of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the observing of which should always be an integral part of a media council's constitution. Such a body can help on the one hand to keep in check monopolistic tendencies and to warn of their dangers. On the other hand, it can pay attention to the serious effect of dissipation of effort. It is not always realized even in Western media circles where competition is held to be good, that too much competition can also be counter-productive. If rivals are using scarce resources — broadcasting frequencies, overseas currency to buy equipment, newsprint etc, and the services of a limited number of trained people, all at the same time, all in the same way, and all directed at the same audience, the range of choice placed before the public can be restricted and not extended. The qualitative nature of the communication can be reduced. The mistake is often made of seeing merit only in the quantitative nature of mass communication and to regard this as a criteria of excellence and of freedom, and in consequence to ignore qualitative values. This is a luxury which the Western developed countries may be able to afford, but Third World countries certainly cannot. They must take every possible step open to them to maximize the effect of their own mass communications media as part of their contribution to the Colombo Conference's call for the «rectification of lack of balance». Opportunities for choice of information sources are more effective when multifaceted than when they are merely duplicated.

In terms of the qualitative value of information in Third World countries it is important also to remember the words of an earlier Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, that held in Algier in 1973. Among a number of affirmations, the Conference proclaimed that they should «consider that cultural alienation and imported civilizations imposed by imperialism and colonialization should be countered by repersonalization and by the constant and determined recourse to the social and cultural values of the people that define them as a sovereign people». Taken as an implicit aim of Third World media councils this adds to the significance of their role during the growth period and the evolution of a mass media philosophy in a Third World country, where the mass media themselves are as yet in the process of maturing and finding their own identity.

So far we have taken count only of the role of media councils in protecting and enlarging the scope of the mass media in terms of freedom of thought, freedom of expression, free flow of ideas and of the encouragement of self-determination. There is another side to the functions which media councils can perform. We are today in the middle of a technological revolution in the field of mass communication. Third World countries need to ensure that they maximize the use of whatever technical resources are available. They need to ensure that such facilities are not misused. The public not only has the right to be informed, but it also has the right to know that those technical resources, national and international, which have been acquired at the expense of not buying some other important development aid — drugs, fertilizers, agricultural or industrial machinery — are not being used for distortion, manipulation, negligence and wilful omission by media and other personnel.

Third World media councils have, if anything, a more important and a more vital role than those established in developed countries. Their basic requirements are that

they try to define the responsibilities of professionals towards the substance (factuality and impartiality), towards the audience (truthfulness and relevance), towards their institutions (media policies and sensitivity) and towards their own freedom (respect for the right to receive and impart information as well as for the rights and privacies of others). But they have others.

In Third World terms, media councils should feel able to take under their aegis a considerable supporting and defensive role on behalf of the media. They should help positively with the educating of communicators in the broadest possible sense, i.e. not merely in practical skills required for their work but in the philosophy of communication and in its global technological developments. They should also be a guarantee to the people of a country, many of whom may not yet be fully capable themselves of evaluating it of the quality of information given to them, of its integrity and honesty. They also should be part of the Third World's justification for a New International Information Order and a New International Economic Order.

## Section two: Draft Models of Media Councils

Draft models of National Media Councils with elements for further consideration. These lists are intended as discussion suggestions only and not in any way as definitive.

A) Purpose, aims and objectives of national media councils :

- i) Preservation of the freedom of the media of mass communications, resisting attempts to restrict access to information, including legislation which has this effect.
- ii) Encouragement of high ethical and professional standards, including either the drafting of possible formal codes of ethics or the codification of a body of case law for the guidance of communicators.
- iii) Promotion of understanding and trust between the media and the public ; providing machinery for the consideration of complaints by the public against the media and vice-versa.
- iv) Intervention between governments and the media where needed and advice to governments on legislation and proposed legislation affecting the proper performance by the media of their duties and obligations to the community.
- v) Involvement in technological developments affecting the media as a whole and with their effects on the economics of operating the media. Related activities are the sponsoring of training both in the practice and the ethical concepts of communication.

vi) Concern with the social and economic effects upon society of new media and technological development.

B) Constitution :

- i) How established : by government, by the media solely whether by proprietor and management working together with the organizations of communicators or by one or the other working separately ; by some outside organization, institution or trust.
- ii) Legal status, rights and obligations towards the media and the public. Degree of independence. Degree of authority recognized by government and weight attached to its recommendations.
- iii) How financed.
- iv) Composition. Number of members, chairmanship, whether legal, government nominee or professional ; whether members drawn only from within the profession ; whether there shall be lay members or government nominees ; procedure for selection, whether by election or nomination. Duration of service, whether for a limited period in each instance only or whether for an indefinite period.
- v) Organization : internal structure, terms of reference and membership and purpose of various sub-committees, etc.

C) General Advisory/Regulatory Functions :

- i) Provision for periodic review by the council of its own work and its effectiveness ; provision for review by some outside body.

ii) Formulation of general advice, rules and policy as well as ethical recommendations affecting the operations of the media ; force of law or any other sanctions accorded to such rules.

iii) Publications : Annual reports, research studies on topics pertaining to the media, etc.

D) Machinery for handling specific complaints :

i) Who is entitled to complain ? ; on what grounds ; machinery for rejecting invalid complaints ; does the council itself initiate complaints ?

ii) Procedure : hearing of evidence ; legal or other outside representation or not ; voting, formulation of decisions, publishing and promulgation of decisions ; obligations on media to publish adjudications,

disciplinary powers ; source of authority for enforcing disciplinary powers, if any ; possibility of appeal by complainant or defendant to any higher authority against a decision by the council ; meetings held in public or private.

iii) Public relations. There must be a continual promotion of general awareness of a media council's existence, its purpose and the possibility of recourse to it, within the media themselves ; with the government ; with the legal profession ; with the general public ; with any academic institutions involved in mass communication studies ; with other mass communication media councils within the same country, within the same region ; throughout the world.





## Final Conclusions

In the country by country survey, an attempt has been made to isolate only factors of difference or of interest. No attempt has been made to repeat or to make continual references to the more common elements. That these exist in the Codes concerned will, it is hoped, be taken for granted. However the factors of difference can be listed as :

1. A significant variation in the wording of one or more of the forms which in other respects are commonly accepted. This is usually done to meet a special need.
2. The inclusion of a special clause (as distinct from mere variation of a widely used form) suited to the ethnic, cultural, or social needs of the country, and not appearing in the Codes of other countries.
3. The inclusion of an original clause in one country's Code which might well be considered by some other countries as equally applicable to their own conditions.
4. The method of operation of a Code of Practice or its application, when it is significantly different from generally accepted international practice.
5. Omissions which might be considered to be significant.

The elements which are commonly to be found in most Codes and which, therefore, have been given most emphasis in the Draft Codes earlier are :

1. The emphasis upon the integrity, truth and objectivity of all forms of news collection and dissemination.
2. The maintenance at all times of the free flow of information, from governments to those whom they govern, and from those who are governed to the governors.
3. The need for the maximum professionalism. A need for the respect and protection of the personal integrity of the journalist by those employing him/her.
4. Loyalty to one's country coupled with a refusal to use one's position as a journalist to undermine its well-being, especially for monetary or ideological reasons or at the behest of a foreign power.
5. Preservation of the confidentiality of sources where this is justified and an agreement so to do has been entered upon ; disclosing the sources of information

in those circumstances where the reader/listener requires that information in order to be able to make proper judgement as to the validity, etc. of the information.

In the survey a number of significant trends emerged.

They can be summarized thus :

1. It is preferable, when any Code of Practice is devised, or Court of Honour set up, that it should arise freely and from the willing desire of the communicators, and not be imposed by any arbitrary authority.
2. Notwithstanding anything said in 1 above, it is also desirable that, at the same time, there should be some form of lay participation in its preparation and subsequent administration.
3. No Code nor Court, like no chain, is stronger than its weakest link. Communicators are human and suffer from all the failings of humanity. They are not a superior race, apart. Only in exceptional circumstances is it possible for a professional Code or Court of Honour to operate entirely successfully, without there being some system of enforcement in the background.
4. Though there must be a great deal in common there are certain fundamental differences which will always prevail between the needs of newspapers and of broadcasting authorities. Broadcasting cannot exist without a greater measure of international licensing and control of hours of output, station strength, etc.
5. Though all people participating in the communications industry have certain aims and purposes in common, since the industry is itself woven out of a number of different strands, there can be areas of conflict between Codes designed by one section of the industry when set against those of another section.
6. There is a growing desire on the part of those who work in the media to have some say in how the media is run and in its philosophies, instead of being mere pawns, whether of capitalist interests or of governments. This desire to be part of the destiny of the industry goes by many names, such as worker-participation, self-determination, Chapel power (in

the Uk meaning that workers' groups wish to participate on equal terms with management) etc., but whatever it is called the aim is the same. It is also almost a universal desire.

In this summary it seems pertinent to formulate a Ten Point Code or set of Guidelines, for the advice of those who are in the process of drawing up Codes, whether they follow the Drafts set out below or anything more individual.

The Ten Point Code is :

1. Codes need, except where there is a highly developed sensitivity, to be backed up by some machinery of enforcement.
2. Codes must not be too general nor too imprecise. If they permit argument over interpretation, they also provide loopholes for evasion in practice.
3. The greater the part which those whose actions the Codes are intended to regulate can play in their formulation the better. But those who are to be the recipients of information and whose interests the Codes are to protect, must also participate in their drafting.
4. No Code of Ethics can be regarded as definitive or static. Like a language, a Code evolves ; meanings change ; attitudes change. Someone or some group must be entrusted with regular revision ; assessment ; and the power to recommend the introduction of new clauses to meet new needs.
5. It is important to decide whether a Code of Ethics or a Court of Honour operating on the basis of case law is the better. If a country's legal machinery is already based on case law, that system may have some merit. But case law is not instant. It can take between a quarter or half a century to build up any effective volume. It can be cumbersome to apply ; difficult for the person aggrieved to comprehend ; and not easy for new entrants to the industry to understand. Its positive quality is that it does evolve out of actual incidents and is not mere theory. Codes of Ethics, unless they are clearly definitive, can allow more laxity of interpretation than case law. But

they are more easy of assimilation and of application to a working situation. An entrant to the industry, or someone moving from one country to work in another, can be presented with a Code and told what are the penalties for infringement (if any). This is not possible with case law.

6. Codes of Ethics can on occasions be invoked or manipulated by workers and their unions to their own advantage against the general interests of the communications industry. This is not so easy to do under case law. But if a Code is backed by an authority empowered to administer sanctions, there can be written into it a clause to prevent worker misapplication.
7. It is important that there shall be some form of appeal from the disciplinary body, however carefully constituted in the first instance. The principle of the right of appeal is too sacred to be overlooked in this context or dismissed with the argument that every dissatisfied complainant would then immediately lodge an appeal. Machinery can be evolved to prevent frivolous appeals.
8. Too great a diversification of Codes within the industry in any one country can lead to confusion on the part of the public. Every effort should be made to consolidate Codes where there is no irreconcilable mutual incompatibility.
9. If Codes of Ethics or Media Councils are not seen by the general public to work, they are valueless. Their work and their value must be publicized, often by the very people whose activities they are designed to control. This, however, is a valuable discipline.
10. Codes of Ethics and Media Councils are signposts. Not only should they point the right way to those engaged in the practice of mass communication, they should also point the way to recipients, showing them how to regard and how to treat those engaged in mass communications. The Free Flow of Information must never be one-way ; the signposts must aid any omni-directional flow, otherwise they will merely be notices of prohibition.

## Appendix

### 1. AUSTRALIA

#### (Code of Ethics of Australian Journalists Association)

Rule 49 of the Australian Journalists Association's Constitution and Rules provides that each member shall observe the following Code of Ethics in his employment :

1. He shall report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
2. He shall not suppress essential facts and shall not distort the truth by omission or wrong or improper emphasis.
3. He shall in all circumstances respect all confidences received by him in the course of his calling.
4. He shall observe at all time the fraternal obligations arising from his membership of the Association, and shall not on any occasion take unfair or improper advantage of a fellow member of the Association.
5. He shall not allow his personal interests to influence him in the discharge of his duties nor shall he accept or offer any present, gift or other consideration benefit or advantage of whatsoever kind if such acceptance or offer is of a character which may have the effect of so influencing or benefiting him.
6. He shall use only fair and honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
7. He shall reveal his identity as a representative of the Press or of radio or television services before obtaining any personal interview for the purpose of using it for publication.
8. He shall do his utmost to maintain full confidence in the integrity and dignity of the calling of a Journalist.

The Rules make provision for District Ethics Committees to investigate complaints of violation of and/or refusal the Code of Ethics and to make recommendations to the District Committee. Recommendations of Ethics Committees must be sent by the District Committee to the General Secretary. The Respondent member is then notified of the recommendation and of his right of appeal to Federal Executive or to a District Ethics Appeal

Committee. A Respondent member has the right to appeal to Federation Council against a decision of an Ethics Appeal Committee or a decision of Federal Executive.

Under Rule 50 a member shall be deemed to have committed an offence if, after procedures as laid down in the Rules, he shall have been found guilty of any of the following :

1. Violation of and/or refusal to observe the Rules of the Association.
2. Violation of and/or refusal to observe a decision of Federal Council, Federal Executive or a District Committee, attention to which has been drawn in the official Journal of the Association or in a letter memorandum or bulletin issued by Federal Council, Federal Executive or a District Committee.
3. Acting detrimentally to the objects of the Association.
4. Violation of and/or refusal to carry out a provision of an industrial award, determination or agreement applicable to him.
5. Disclosing to a person not entitled to know it any confidential matter of the Association.
6. Misappropriating money and/or property belonging to the Association.
7. Violation of and/or refusal to observe the Association's Code of Ethics.

A member found guilty of an offence shall be liable to any of the following penalties, namely, warning, rebuke, censure, disbarment from holding office, suspension and/or removal from office, fine (to a maximum of \$ 100), expulsion from membership of the Association.

### 2. CANADA

#### A - Code of Broadcast News Ethics

##### Radio Television News Directors Association of Canada

Recognizing the importance to a Democracy of an informed public, the members of the Radio Television

News Directors Association of Canada believe that the broadcasting of factual, objective and timely news is the finest public service radio or television stations can perform.

To that end, they declare their acceptance of the standards of practice here set forth, and their solemn intent to honour them to the limits of their ability.

1. The primary purpose of broadcast newsmen is to inform the public of events of importance and appropriate interest in a manner that is accurate and comprehensive.
2. Broadcast news presentations shall be designed not only to offer timely and accurate information, but also to present it in the light of relevant circumstances that give it meaning and perspective. This standard means that news reports, when clarity demands it will be laid against pertinent factual background ; that factors such as race, creed, nationality or prior status will be reported only when they are relevant ; that comment or subjective content will be properly identified ; and that errors in fact will be promptly acknowledged and corrected.
3. Broadcast newsmen shall seek to select material for newcast solely on their evaluation of its merits as news. This standard means that news will be selected on the criteria of significance. It excludes sensationalism or misleading emphasis in any efforts to influence news selection and presentation, whether from within the broadcasting industry or from without.
4. Broadcast newsmen shall at all times display humane respect for the dignity, privacy and the well-being of persons with whom the news deals.
5. Broadcast newsmen shall govern their personal lives and such non-professional associations as may impinge on their professional activities in a manner that will protect them from conflict of interest, real or apparent.
6. Broadcast newsmen shall seek actively to present all news the knowledge of which will serve the public interest. They shall make constant effort to open doors closed to the reporting of public proceedings with tools appropriate to broadcasting, consistent with the public interest. They acknowledge the newsmen's ethic of protection of confidential information and sources, unless this would clearly and unmistakably defy the public interest.
7. News Directors recognize the responsibility borne by broadcasting to present informed analysis and comment or editorial opinion on public events and issues. They accept the responsibility for the presentation of such matters by individuals whose experience and judgement qualify them for it.
8. Broadcast newsmen shall conduct themselves with dignity. They shall keep broadcast equipment as unobtrusive and silent as possible. Where facilities are inadequate, pool broadcasts should be arranged.

Broadcast newsmen should attempt to prevent their presence and that of their equipment from distorting the character or importance of events, e.g. demonstrations, civil disorders, etc.

9. In reporting matters that are or may be litigated, the newsmen shall avoid practices which would tend to interfere with the right of an individual to a fair trial.
10. This Association shall actively censure and seek to prevent violations of these standards, and members shall actively encourage their observance by all newsmen, whether of the Radio Television News Directors Association or not.

Adopted in 1970.

#### **B - Charter of Professional Integrity of the Canadian Association of French Language Journalists**

The Canadian Association of French Language Journalists has adopted a «Charter of Professional Integrity», which says that any newspaperman worthy of the name must :

1. Work actively to obtain exact information and to ensure the distribution of facts : multiply the methods of investigation in order to reach a maximum of certainty and truth ;
2. Take the moral responsibility of his work and neither demand nor accept tasks not worthy of his professional dignity ;
3. Maintain that defamation, blackmail and accusations without proof are the gravest professional faults ; make no accusations, even if well-founded, nor reveal facts of a personal nature, except in the public interest ;
4. Refuse to use disloyal means, such as fraud, blackmail and intimidation, to obtain facts or to learn the truth ; unless circumstances justify it, must not conceal or falsify his identity to obtain information which would otherwise be refused him ;
5. Never accept bribes ; refuse gratuities, gifts or personal advantages susceptible of affecting his independence and alienating his freedom of thought or action ;
6. Not take part in any commercial activity prejudicial to the free exercise of his profession or contrary to its interests ;
7. Not guarantee with his signature a text the insertion of which is paid, and, in practising his profession, must not accept publicity undertakings ;
8. Not commit any plagiarism ;
9. Never request to take over a colleague's position nor provoke his dismissal by offering to work for lesser conditions ;
10. Strive for objectivity, that is to say, strive to reveal all the facts of a given situation, all the opinions in a conflict, all the particulars of a problem ; but, in reporting a fact (réalité) must not omit under any

pretext to cite the explanations and to relate the circumstances without which this fact would be unintelligible ;

11. Strive constantly, by use of all the techniques and methods available to the press, by personal effort or sustained work, by research and innovation, to make information available to the public.
12. Undertake, if he abandons his profession, no longer to take advantage of the rights or the titles to which he has no further title.

### 3. EGYPT (ARAB REPUBLIC OF)

#### Charter of Work and Code of Ethics in the Press.

*We, egyptian journalists,*

*Believing* in the positive role played by the national press throughout the long struggle of the Egyptian people, by giving expression to its aspirations, sharing its sufferings and supporting its great movement for liberation from all forms of exploitation and oppression,

*Convinced* that the press should continue to fulfill the constructive mission it has shouldered in its march alongside the Revolution of 23 July 1952, supporting its political and social endeavour and protecting its progressive achievements in the service of Egyptian and Arab masses and its promise of fulfilment to their legitimate hopes and aspirations,

*Emphasizing* the importance and the seriousness of the responsibility of the press to be a true mirror of society, and a source of guidance and leadership in the service of the basic principles formulated by the Egyptian people in its long struggle for liberation,

*Firmly believing* that the press should remain, by truth alone, a weapon in the hands of the people, that its freedom can only exist with the people's support and as an extension of its freedom, and that it should serve the interests of the working masses as expressed in their solidarity within the Arab Socialist Union,

*State*

That the ethics of journalistic work are not a function of good performance alone, but derive primarily from the honourable objective served by the published word. The word which is not committed to the service of our people's progress is a word devoid of honour, and the honour of commitment in press work can only be achieved when that work is a conscious choice, independent of all kinds of tutelage, censorship, orientation and containment ;

That independent undertaking by the press of its role, on its own social responsibility in the service of the people and under its sole control, is the prime condition of honourable performance and responsibility in journalistic work ; and

On the basis of this statement, in fulfilment by the journalists, individually and collectively, of their

responsibility, and in implementation of Article 72 of Law No. 76/1970 on the Establishment of the Press Syndicate, which makes it incumbent upon every journalist to adhere to his professional conduct to the principles of honour, honesty and impartiality, and to the ethics and traditions of the profession,

*Declare*

1. Our total adherence to the basic instruments which guide the struggle of the Egyptian people, particularly the Charter of National Action (1962), the Declaration of 30 March (1968) and the Programme of National Action (1971), and to all the principles and objectives defined therein, and, within this adherence, we emphasize the following principles in particular :

(a) Preservation, free from usurpation, occupation and subservience ;

(b) Pursuit of the evolution towards socialism as a system and a way of life and social behaviour ;

(c) Democracy as the only healthy and sound framework for practising political liberties, foremost among which are the freedom of the word of expression and of opinion ;

(d) Spiritual values as an essential component of the cultural and intellectual heritage of the Egyptian people, and as a motive force for its struggle ;

(e) Building up of Arab Egypt as a historical truth and as a necessity of its future and destiny ;

(f) Alliance with the forces of progressive revolution all over the world, given that the Arab revolution, led by the Egyptian people, is an integral part of the international struggle for freedom and socialism ;

(g) Promotion of work, peace and international co-operation in line with the United Nations Charter and international conventions and agreements ;

(h) Defence of the freedom of the press against any encroachment, and the indictment of anyone who accepts such an encroachment or takes part therein ; this being in confirmation of the right of the working masses, and especially the workers, peasants and intellectuals, to know the whole truth and freely express their opinion ;

2. Our full commitment not to obtain, or try to obtain, information or facts except by legitimate means, to transmit them truthfully and honestly to the masses and to protect the press against any deviation from professional ethics and against any prejudice to the interests of the working masses, who are the real proprietors of the press. This commitment shall include abstention from publishing doubtful information, misrepresenting correct information, attributing words or deeds to any person or party without adequate veri-

- fication, or adding statements to those made by any person or party without his authorization ;
3. Our full commitment to assist the administration of justice in its investigations and proceedings, by publishing all facts, information and opinions related to an open investigation or to a trial in process without any partiality to or against the accused in criminal cases or the contending parties in civil cases, without prejudice, however, to the right of the journalist to comment on the event from the viewpoint of the public. We also adhere to the obligation not to publish the names or photographs of minors accused or arraigned for trial, so as to protect their future careers and facilitate their reformation and return to the fold of society. Publication by the papers of crime news shall also avoid sensational and exaggerated reporting ;
  4. Our total commitment not to exploit the profession for the purpose of obtaining without legal right any personal benefits of any kind, or use the rights of journalists to write and publish for supporting, without clear and objective reasons, any side in any issue dealt with by the press. We also undertake not to publish the photographs of non-public figures on other than public occasions without their prior agreement ;
  5. Our total adherence to the principle that every journalist shall bear, jointly with the editor-in-chief, the entire responsibility for the facts, information or opinions he publishes, and our rejection of any attempt to shirk this responsibility on the pretence that publication had been in execution of instructions emanating from any party whatever outside the press ;
  6. Our full commitment to respect the reputation of the family, and of individuals, and the privacy of the citizens' personal life, except in so far as related to and bearing on public life. This shall imply the obligation to refrain from publishing personal and/or family scandals likely to weaken or sever social ties ;
  7. Our full commitment to publish, upon request from the party concerned, corrections to previously published information, without prejudice to the right of the journalist to comment thereon, in explanation of his point of view on the subject ;
  8. Our total adherence to strict objectivity in whatever we write and publish ; this being particularly applicable to criticism of anything relating to public figures, which may have an adverse effect on the discharge of their responsibilities and duties towards the Nation ;
  9. Our full commitment to see to it that all advertisements and publicity are in accordance with the general principles of society and of the mission of the press as defined in this Charter. This shall make it imperative to ensure complete dissociation of writing activities from publicity activities. We hereby state, therefore, our commitment not to engage in publicity work. We also undertake, in publicizing political information or views provided by foreign bodies for that purpose, to ensure that they do not run counter to national policy, and that the charges for publishing them are in accordance with the established rates, so as to preclude the possibility of the advertisement becoming a vehicle of indirect subsidy from foreign countries. Furthermore, we undertake to respect copyright obligations in our periodicals and other publications, and to mention the source of whatever we cite or quote.
  10. Our full commitment to guard professional secrets and reject any pressure to divulge them, it being clearly understood that the secrets kept by any journalist are an integral part of the professional secrets which cannot be revealed.
- In order to enable journalists to respect all the commitments they have taken upon themselves and to play their full role free from all restrictions while accepting the responsibility imposed by such freedom, we demand :
1. Clear definition of the relationship between press institutions and the Arab Socialist Union as an embodiment of solidarity among the working masses, and the agent through which these masses own the press institutions. This definition should be such as to allow the press to be a true instrument of expression for all the working masses, without domination or control, being obliged only to adhere to the general political line of the Arab Socialist Union. No position of leadership in the press shall be occupied by anyone against whom socialist measures have been taken in compliance with the will of the working masses or in confirmation of their rights ;
  2. Non-interference by the executive and administrative authorities in the direction, orientation or administration of the press, whether this interference be through the imposition of direct censorship on the press, issuing instructions of any kind thereto or in any other form ; such interference shall be regarded as a violation of the rights of the working masses ;
  3. Full respect of and adherence to Law 76/1970, regulating disciplinary measures for journalists. Journalists should not be discharged, trans-



ferred to non-journalistic jobs, demoted, barred from performing their work in any way or subjected to any penalty except within the framework of the Law of their Syndicate and by the authority designated to take the disciplinary measures provided for in that Law. Consequently, no outside authority shall interfere in the affairs of journalists, and regulations should be drawn up to determine the relationships between journalists within their institutions ;

4. Definition and regulation of the role of advertising in a way which is compatible with the conditions and circumstances of a society in process of transformation into a socialist one and struggling for liberation from economic exploitation, and precludes the possibility of publicity becoming a means of pressure on the press and consequently of dominating it ;
5. The obligation of all the responsible authorities to supply all the facts, information and data available to them to the journalists who ask for them, so as to ensure the right of the masses to know all the facts and be informed of all affairs ;
6. Elimination of all obstacles and restrictions barring journalists from access to external sources of information, by making these sources available and removing, for the benefit of journalists, the censorship imposed on foreign papers and periodicals ;
7. Ensuring the right of journalists to cover any event of international importance on the site of the event regardless of the nature of the State's official relations with the country where it has occurred ;
8. Recognition of the journalist's right to express his own point of view, regardless of differences in ideological orientation, provided that such expression does not run counter to the principles enunciated in the four political instruments already mentioned in this Charter ;
9. The board of the Press Syndicate shall contact the competent authorities with a view to implementing these demands and having them officially proclaimed by the President of the Arab Socialist Union ;
10. We also declare that any violation of the provisions of this Charter after its issue shall be considered a deviation from the ethics of the profession, and the Syndicate's Board shall take against the offender the disciplinary measures provided for in Law No. 76/1970 on the establishment of the Press Syndicate.

Adopted in 1972.

## 4. INDIA

### The New Press Code of India

The latest Press Code to be announced is «a set of detailed rules to govern journalistic ethics which will enable the newspapers and journalists to discharge their high social and national responsibilities». The Code which has the legislative authority of the Government of India was announced by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting in May 1976, and has the acceptance of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference. After a preamble there are fourteen points :

«As the press is an essential organ of the democratic set-up, an important vehicle of communication and an instrument in the creation of public opinion, the journalists should regard their profession as a trust to serve public interest. In pursuance of this objective, the press should provide a truthful, comprehensive and reliable account of the events in a context which gives them meaning ; project a representative picture of the constituent groups in society ; regard itself as a forum for comment and criticism and discharge social responsibility by clarifying the goals and values of society.

Our goals are enshrined in the preamble to the Constitution which embodies «the resolve of the people to secure for all citizens ; justice, social, economic and political ; liberty of thought, expression, belief faith and worship ; equality of status and of opportunity ; and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation». This preamble is reinforced by the Directive Principles of State Policy which lay down that the State shall strive «to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of the national life.»

«To discharge this social responsibility, it is evident that the moral and ethical behaviour of the press should reflect the values of society at large ; so should criticism.

«In pursuance of this trust and social responsibility, the following Code of Ethics will be applicable :

1) In the discharge of their duties, journalists shall attach full value, to fundamental human and social rights, shall hold good faith and fair play in news, reports and comments as essential professional obligations.

2) Journalists and newspapers shall endeavour to highlight and promote activities of the State and public which aim at national unity, solidarity, integrity and economic and social progress.

3) Journalists and newspapers shall avoid reports and comments which tends to promote tensions likely to lead, or leading to civil disorder, mutiny or rebellion. Violence must be condemned unequivocally.

4) Journalists and newspapers shall ensure that information disseminated is factual. No fact shall be

distorted nor information known to be false or not believed to be true shall be published.

5) No sensational or tendentious report of a speculative nature shall be published. Any report or comments found to be inaccurate shall be rectified by prominent publication.

6) Confidence shall always be respected. Professional secrecy shall be preserved.

7) Journalists shall not exploit their status for non-journalistic purposes or inquiries and shall not allow personal interest to influence professional conduct.

8) There is nothing so unworthy as the acceptance or demand of a bribe or inducement for the exercise by a journalist of his power to give or deny publicity to news or comment.

9) Journalists and newspapers shall not indulge in personal controversies in which no public interest is involved.

10) Journalists and newspapers shall not give currency to or publish rumours or gossip or even verifiable news affecting the private life of individuals.

11) Newspapers shall refrain from publishing matter including advertisements which is obscene or is likely to encourage vice, crime and unlawful activities.

12) Journalists and newspapers shall promote and project the national objectives of democracy, secularism and socialism.

13) Journalists and newspapers shall refrain from giving tendentious treatment to news of disturbances, involving caste, community, class, religion or language groupings and shall not publish details or numbers or identity of groups involved in such disturbances except as officially authorized.

14) Journalists and newspapers shall not publish information and comments detrimental to the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State and friendly relations with foreign countries.»

## 5. JAPAN

### Canons of Journalism of the Nihon Shinbun Kyokai

#### *Sphere of News Reporting and Editorial Writing.*

The freedom of news reporting and editorial writing should be bound by the following voluntary restraints :

1. The fundamental rule of news reporting is to convey facts accurately and faithfully.
2. In reporting news, the personal opinion of the reporter should never be inserted.
3. In treating news, one should always remember and be strictly on guard against the possibility of such news being utilized for propaganda purpose.
4. Criticism of persons should be limited to such as that which could be made direct in the face of the persons involved.

5. Partisanship in editorial comments, which knowingly departs from the truth, does violence to the best spirit of journalism.

#### *The Principle of Editorial Comment.*

An editorial comment should be a bold expression of the writer's own belief and conviction and not a flattering speech. Furthermore, in writing an editorial comment, the writer should maintain the public spirit of being a speaker for those who otherwise have no means of voicing their opinions. The characteristic of a newspaper as a public organ should be best upheld in this field.

#### *Impartiality.*

The honour of an individual should be respected and protected as in the case of his other fundamental personal rights. Those who are to be criticized should be given the opportunity to defend themselves. Mistakes, if made, should be retracted immediately upon receipt of information that the article in question is false, and should be corrected.

#### *Tolerance.*

A fundamental principle of democracy recognizes that the freedom of individual assertions and counter-assertions, should be reflected clearly in editing newspapers. The tolerance such as to allot just as much news space in introducing and reporting the policies which a newspaper opposes as it would give to others which it supports is the fundamental character of democratic newspapers.

#### *Guidance, Responsibility and Pride.*

The principal difference between newspapers and other commercial enterprises is that newspapers in their reportorial and editorial activities exercise great influence over the public. The public chiefly depend on newspapers as the source of information and the basis of their judgement of public events and problems. From this distinction arises the public character of journalistic enterprises and the special social status of journalists. The realization of their responsibility and pride by journalists is fundamental in ensuring their special status. These two points must be observed by each individual journalist.

#### *Decency.*

A high sense of public decency is naturally required of newspapers because of their share in influencing public opinion. Such a standard of decency can be achieved by abiding with the above-mentioned principles. Newspapers and journalists, when they fail to observe those principles, will invite public condemnations and disapproval by other papers and journalists and in the end

will be unable to operate or work. Therefore, all members of the Association should make efforts to co-operate and maintain a higher ethical standard by promoting their moral unity, guaranteeing free access to news material and assisting each other in newspaper production. Thus, the association of newspapers which strictly observe the Canons of Journalism shall be able to accelerate and ensure the democratization of Japan and simultaneously elevate Japanese newspapers to the world standard.

(Adopted in 1946).

## 6. SWEDEN

### The Rules of the Swedish Newspaper Publishers' Association (TU) on text advertising.

The editorial contents :

The aim of the editorial contents of a newspaper or a journal is to inform, comment and entertain. These contents shall be the result of exclusively editorial initiatives and judgement.

The editorial staff decides :

The confidence of the public in the activity of the press as an intermediary of news and information must be maintained. This presupposes that the editorial staff constantly stands guard over their duty to decide on the editorial contents of the newspaper.

A favourable reference in an editorial place to a person, an organization, or an enterprise is often interpreted as free advertising, while a negative one is interpreted by many as harmful publicity. None of these circumstances should, however, be a basis for journalistic judgement. Only the news value and information value of the contents should be decisive.

Suspicion must not arise that outsiders can influence the decisions of the editorial staff concerning the journalistic shape of the newspaper. Any kind of reference in the text or publication of a picture, being the condition for advertisement, must be rejected.

Text advertising :

The editorial staff will in each particular case judge the publication value of texts and pictures intended for editorial publication. Texts and pictures not in line with editorial demands for news value or information value must then be rejected. This applies mainly to :

- Messages from private or public enterprises (also including so called entertainment industry) ;
- messages from authorities ;
- messages from organizations of commercial life or professions ;

but also other demands for space, where the journalistic news and information value is doubtful or none, should be rejected.

Examples referring to the basic rules :

General principles

Generally, the rule is that the aspect of news and information should always be observed, when the edito-

rial staff considers some material for publication. Quite often, a text or picture submitted to the newspaper has only a commercial or other kind of advertising value. The interest of publication lies then with the sender, not with the newspaper. In such a case it is the journalistic duty of the editorial staff to reject the publication of the material.

Often, however, such a text or picture, arising from a more or less commercial aim, may have at the same time considerable common news and information value. In such a case it is journalistically correct to publish the material in the interest of the public. It will then be important to prepare another edition of the material or through re-arrangement hold up what has news and information value, thereby preventing that the commercial feature could be greater than warranted by the journalistic valuation.

A new model car can be grand news the first time it is published. The interest of the reader and the manufacturer will then concur. But if a newspaper has once given publicity to a new car model, the news value will fall considerably when the new car is again introduced locally.

In the same way a fashion show may give some information about current clothes — but more often only about the collection of one manufacturer or shop. A report from an isolated fashion show, in other words, gives the reader only limited information. Editorial initiatives to collocate news about clothes from different factories and shops give the reader broader and better information.

To publish commercial articles slackly edited, to report mercantile arrangements of different kinds as a mere routine, to insert statements from authorities and organizations without a thought of their news and information value, to give any way to the pressure or appeal of advertisers, to publish an uninteresting text in the «interest of Society» or the «common good», this is to indulge in the publication of text advertising.

Always to judge the publication value to the readers of some material, to take your own initiative instead of letting others outside the editorial staff do it, constantly to place the demands of the reader above claims, journalistically unwarranted, to publicity from businesses, organizations and authorities — this is to keep the text advertising away from the columns of the newspaper.

Business enterprises :

Information on business hours of enterprises, demonstrations, assemblies of information, and prize competitions are regarded as text advertising and should be rejected on principle.

The greatest restriction should be observed regarding the publicity given to newly-established shops and rebuilding of shops. Consider the fact that the news value varies with the size of the community.

A list of contractors and suppliers to construction jobs must not be inserted. Exceptions may be made for main contractors and architects.

Great restrictions should likewise be observed about publicity around jubilees of firms.

**Public authorities :**

Public authorities often lay claim to text space for information of pure proclamation type. Such material is, in principle, rejected (as an example, business hours of official institutions, taxation rules, physicians on duty, health control).

**Church Services :**

For the announcement of church services it is also the rule that they must be regarded as of a proclamatory character. As such they should be found, as a rule, in the advertisement columns.

**Activities of Unions :**

Notices in advance of meetings and sessions, jubilees, conferences, lectures, evening gatherings, tutorial circles, collective meetings and so on are not to be published unless they have an unchallengeable news value.

Appeals and thanks from individuals are not inserted as editorial text. The most severe restriction must be observed even when it is a matter of appeals from organizations.

**Culture and entertainments :**

Text in advance on theatre performances, concerts, cinemas, art exhibitions, etc., fall under the same rules for the estimation of news value. Pure advertising material should not be published. Notices in advance, particularly concerning films, must not have the form of a review nor contain opinions of any kind. A review is inserted once. For second performances or presentations in different parts of the circulation area of a newspaper the note is made short, possibly with a reference to the review.

In matters of art a notice is inserted about works of art sold, only if the purchase is made by museums, public institutions, or societies of art.

**Own arrangements :**

When a newspaper itself sponsors or contributes to sponsoring public meetings, competitions, or such like, as well as political meetings, the newspaper decides independently of the recommendation of TU the scope of the text. The journalistic value of material inserted into the text must, however, always be carefully verified.

**Gifts, Travels, etc.**

Gifts to the editorial staff and to individual members of the staff should, in principle, be rejected, unless it is a matter of samples without value.

Great restraint must be observed about participation in free trips. Never give promises in advance of publicity. When judging whether an offer should be accepted or not the supposed journalistic value of the trip must be the point of aim. If a trip is accepted and turns out to give little or no result, as to news and information, it is a journalistic duty to refrain from publicity.

Great moderation must be observed about so-called press luncheons. Normally, the editorial staff would pick up their information in a less time-wasting way.

## **7. UNITED KINGDOM**

### **A. Negative Code**

In 1973, during strike action taken by the United Kingdom National Union of Journalists, the Code issued to members during the work-to-rule period included :

- WE WON'T* : take less than a full hour for lunch and we will all take our lunch hour at the same time.
- WE WON'T* : work outside the agreed 40-hour week, and «waiting time» between jobs will be counted as working time.
- WE WON'T* : tackle more than one job at a time.
- WE WON'T* : deputize for anyone else in the office.
- WE WON'T* : co-operate with non-union members.
- WE WON'T* : handle non-NUJ copy, such as that of village correspondents.
- WE WON'T* : use office cars without first insisting on stringent safety checks before journeys.
- WE WON'T* : fill more pages in a given issue than were in the equivalent issue of a year ago.

### **B. Race Relations Guidelines**

**June 1976 - Draft Clauses Produced by the Guild of British Newspapers for a Press Charter.**

The United Kingdom National Union of Journalists has promulgated the following additional guidelines to cover race relations :

Only mention someone's race or nationality if strictly relevant.

Resist the temptation to sensationalize issues which could harm race relations.

Press for equal opportunities for employment of black staff, particularly in areas of extensive minority group settlement.

Seek to achieve wider and better coverage of black affairs : social, political, cultural.

Investigate the treatment of blacks in education, employment and housing and the activities of racist organizations.

These guidelines relate to Clause 10 of the revised code of conduct, which was approved at the 1975 Annual Delegates Meeting in Cardiff. This clause enjoins journalists not to «originate material designed to encourage discrimination on grounds of race, colour, creed or sex and exacerbate relationships».

### **C. June 1976 - Draft Clauses Produced by the Guild of British Newspapers for a Press Charter**

1. We declare our support for the principle of the Freedom of the Press to collect and publish information and to express comment and criticism as an essential part of a democratic society.

2. The proprietors have an ultimate responsibility for the character and successful development of a publication, including in some cases its political tradition. But, unless a proprietor chooses to be his own editor, that responsibility is best discharged by choosing an editor and giving him full responsibility for the conduct and content of the publication.
3. The editor shall accept and be accorded final responsibility in law and in practice for the content of his publication.
4. While it is proper for any individual or group to seek to influence an editor's decision on the content or conduct of his publication, any threat or action aimed at preventing him from exercising his free and independent judgement would amount to improper pressure.
5. The editor shall consider himself at all times a custodian of the Freedom of the Press. Both the law and the Press Council accept that Freedom of the Press includes freedom to be partisan. But an editor has an obligation to allow people who are criticized a reasonable opportunity to reply and to ensure that facts in news stories are not distorted or misleadingly incomplete or that any item is omitted for improper reasons. It is an editor's duty to support his staff against unjustified criticism and respect their professional integrity.
6. The editor shall be free to choose his contributors and to publish or not to publish any articles or other material. The public should at all times be able to submit items and photographs and the final decision whether they should be included shall rest with the editor.
7. The editor shall be responsible for the appointment and training of his staff. He shall at all times be free to choose the journalist best qualified in his opinion to cover a particular assignment and shall resist any improper pressure on him to influence his choice.
8. The editor of a publication, or other person exercising the duties of an editor in his absence, shall be enabled to discharge these duties free from any obligation to belong to a trade union. An editor shall be free at all times to perform any editorial function and to endeavour to produce his publication using what skills and resources he has at his command.
9. Any journalist shall be free to belong to the trade union of his choice. A journalist shall not be arbitrarily or unreasonably excluded from membership of a trade union.
10. In any dispute arising from the interpretation or application of the principles enumerated in this Charter, whether between a member of the public and a newspaper, or between a proprietor and an editor, or between either and a staff member, the Press Council, as at present constituted, shall be the proper authority to determine the issue.

#### D. Objects of the United Kingdom Press Council

The Articles of Constitution of The Press Council approved by The Newspaper Publishers' Association Ltd., The Newspaper Society, Periodical Publishers Association Ltd., The Scottish Daily Newspaper Society, Scottish Newspaper Proprietors' Association, The Institute of Journalists, The National Union of Journalists and The Guild of British Newspaper Editors state that the Objects of the Council are :

1. To preserve the established freedom of the British Press.
2. To maintain the character of the British Press in accordance with the highest professional and commercial standards.
3. To consider complaints about the conduct of the Press or the conduct of persons and organizations towards the Press ; to deal with these complaints in whatever manner might seem practical and appropriate and record resultant action.
4. To keep under review developments likely to restrict the supply of information of public interest and importance.
5. To report publicly on developments that may tend towards greater concentration or monopoly in the Press (including changes in ownership, control and growth of Press undertakings) and to publish statistical information relating thereto.
6. To make representations on appropriate occasions to the Government, organs of the United Nations and to Press organizations abroad.
7. To publish periodical reports recording the Council's work and to review from time to time, developments in the Press and the factors affecting them.

#### E. National Union of Journalists

Like other trade unions, formed for mutual protection and economic betterment, the National Union of Journalists desires and encourages its members to maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct.

Through years of courageous struggle for better wages and working conditions its pioneers and their successors have kept these aims in mind, and have made provision in Union rules not only for penalties on offenders, but for the guidance and financial support of members who may suffer loss of work for conforming to Union principles.

While punishment by fine, suspension or expulsion is provided for in cases of «conduct detrimental to the interests of the Union or of the profession», any member who is victimized (Rule 20, clause (f) for refusing to do

work... «incompatible with the honour and interests of the profession», may rely on adequate support from Union funds.

A member of the Union has two claims on his loyalty — one by his Union and one by his employer. These need not clash so long as the employer complies with the agreed Union conditions and makes no demand for forms of service incompatible with the honour of the profession or with the principles of trade unionism.

1. A member should do nothing that would bring discredit on himself, his Union, his newspaper, or his profession. He should study the rules of his Union, and should not, by commission or omission, act against the interests of the Union.

2. Unless the employer consents to a variation, a member who wishes to terminate his employment must give notice, according to agreement or professional custom.

3. No member should seek promotion or seek to obtain the position of another journalist by unfair methods. A member should not, directly or indirectly, attempt to obtain for himself or any one else any commission, regular or occasional, held by a freelance member of the Union.

4. It is unprofessional conduct to exploit the labour of another journalist by plagiarism, or by using his copy for lineage purposes without permission.

5. Staff men who do lineage work should be prepared to give up such work to conform with any pooling scheme approved by the National Executive Council, or any Union plan to provide a freelance member with a means earning a living.

6. A member holding a staff appointment shall serve first the paper that employs him. In his own time a member is free to engage in other creative work, but he should not undertake any extra work in his rest time or holidays if by so doing he is depriving an out-of-work member of a chance to obtain employment. Any misuse of rest days — won by the Union on the sound argument that periods of recuperation are needed after strenuous hours of labour — is damaging to trade union aims for a shorter working week.

7. While a spirit of willingness to help other members should be encouraged at all times, members are under a special obligation of honour to help an unemployed member to obtain work.

8. Every journalist should treat subordinates as considerately as he would desire to be treated by his superiors.

9. Freedom in the honest collection and publication of news facts, and the rights of fair comment and criticism, are principles which every journalist should defend.

10. A journalist should fully realize his personal responsibility for everything he sends to his paper or agency. He should keep Union and professional secrets, and respect all necessary confidences regarding sources of information and private documents. He should not falsify information or documents, or distort or misrepresent facts.

11. In obtaining news or pictures, reports and Press photographers should do nothing that will cause pain or

humiliation to innocent, bereaved, or otherwise distressed persons. News, pictures, and documents should be acquired by honest methods only.

12. Every journalist should keep in mind the dangers in the laws of libel, contempt of court, and copyright. In reports of law court proceedings it is necessary to observe and practise the rule of fair play to all parties.

13. Whether for publication or suppression, the acceptance of a bribe by a journalist is one of the gravest professional offences.

## 8. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### A. The American Society of Newspaper Editors

#### Canons of Journalism

##### I. *Responsibility.*

The right of a newspaper to attract and hold readers is restricted by nothing but considerations of public welfare. The use a newspaper makes of the share of public attention it gains serves to determine its sense of responsibility, which it shares with every member of its staff. A journalist who uses his power for any selfish or otherwise unworthy purpose is faithless to a high trust.

##### II. *Freedom of the press.*

Freedom of the press is to be guarded as a vital right of mankind. It is the unquestionable right to discuss whatever is not explicitly forbidden by law, including the wisdom of any restrictive statute.

##### III. *Independence.*

Freedom from all obligations except that of fidelity to the public interest is vital.

1. Promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare, for whatever reason, is not compatible with honest journalism. So-called news communications from private sources should not be published without public notice of their source or else substantiation of their claims to value as news, both in form and substance.

2. Partisanship in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth does violence to the best spirit of American journalism; in the news columns it is subversive of a fundamental principle of the profession.

##### IV. *Sincerity, truthfulness, accuracy.*

Good faith with the reader is the foundation of all journalism worthy of the name.

1. By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is constrained to be truthful. It is to be excused for lack of thoroughness or accuracy within its control or failure to obtain command of these essential qualities.

2. Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles which they surmount.

##### V. *Impartiality.*

Sound practice makes clear distinction between reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind.

This rule does not apply to so-called special articles unmistakably devoted to advocacy or characterized by a signature authorizing the writer's own conclusions and interpretations.

#### VI. *Fair play.*

A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard ; right practice demands the giving of such opportunity in all cases of serious accusation outside judicial proceedings.

1. A newspaper should not invade private rights or feelings without sure warrant of public right as distinguished from public curiosity.

2. It is the privilege, as it is the duty, of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own serious mistakes of fact or opinion, whatever their origin.

#### VII. *Decency.*

A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if, while professing high moral purpose it supplies incentives to base conduct, such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good. Lacking authority to enforce its canons, the journalism here represented can but express the hope that deliberate pandering to vicious instincts will encounter effective public disapproval or yield to the influence of a preponderant professional condemnation.

Adopted 1923.

### B. The Code of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, believes the duty of journalists is to serve the truth.

We believe the agencies of mass communication are carriers of public discussion and information, acting on their Constitutional mandate and freedom to learn and report the facts.

We believe in public enlightenment as the forerunner of justice, and in our Constitutional role to seek the truth as part of the public's right to know the truth.

We believe those responsibilities carry obligations that require journalists to perform with intelligence, objectivity, accuracy, and fairness.

To these ends, we declare acceptance of the standards of practice here set forth :

#### I. *Responsibility :*

The public's right to know of events of public importance and interest is the overriding mission of the mass media. The purpose of distributing news and enlightened opinion is to serve the general welfare. Journalists who use their professional status as representatives of the public for selfish or other unworthy motives violate a high trust.

#### II. *Freedom of the press :*

Freedom of the press is to be guarded as an inalienable right of people in a free society. It carries with it the free-

dom and the responsibility to discuss, question, and challenge actions and utterances of our government and of our public and private institutions. Journalists uphold the right to speak unpopular opinions and the privilege to agree with the majority.

#### III. *Ethics :*

Journalists must be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

1. Gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment or privileges can compromise the integrity of journalists and their employers. Nothing of value should be accepted.

2. Secondary employment, political involvement, holding public office, and service in community organizations should be avoided if it compromises the integrity of journalists and their employers. Journalists and their employers should conduct their personal lives in a manner which protects them from conflict of interest, real or apparent. Their responsibilities to the public are paramount. That is the nature of their profession.

3. So-called news communications from private sources should not be published or broadcast without substantiation of their claims to news value.

4. Journalists will seek news that serves the public interest despite the obstacles. They will make constant efforts to assure that the public's business is conducted in public and that public records are open to public inspection.

5. Journalists acknowledge the newsman's ethic of protecting confidential sources of information.

#### IV. *Accuracy and objectivity :*

Good faith with the public is the foundation of all worthy journalism.

1. Truth is our ultimate goal.

2. Objectivity in reporting the news is another goal which serves as the mark of an experienced professional. It is a standard of performance toward which we strive. We honour those who achieve it.

3. There is no excuse for inaccuracies or lack of thoroughness.

4. Newspaper headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles they accompany. Photographs and telecasts should give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight a minor incident out of context.

5. Sound practice makes clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue.

6. Partisanship in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth violates the spirit of American journalism.

7. Journalists recognize their responsibility for offering informed analysis, comment, and editorial opinion on public events and issues. They accept the obligation to present such material by individuals whose competence, experience, and judgment qualify them for it.



8. Special articles or presentations devoted to advocacy or the writer's own conclusions and interpretations should be labelled as such.

#### V. *Fair play* :

Journalists at all times will show respect for the dignity, privacy, rights, and well-being of people encountered in the course of gathering and presenting the news.

1. The news media should not communicate unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without giving the accused a chance to reply.

2. The news media must guard against invading a person's right to privacy.

3. The media should not pander to morbid curiosity about details of vice and crime.

4. It is the duty of news media to make prompt and complete correction of their errors.

5. Journalists should be accountable to the public for their reports and the public should be encouraged to voice its grievances against the media. Open dialogue with our readers, viewers, and listeners should be fostered.

#### VI. *Pledge*.

Journalists should actively censure and try to prevent violations of these standards, and they should encourage their observance by all newspeople. Adherence to this code of ethics is intended to preserve the bond of mutual trust and respect between American journalists and the American people.

Adopted 1973.

### 9. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS

#### Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists (Text adopted by the Congress of *Bordeaux* (France) — 1954)

This international Declaration is proclaimed as a standard of professional conduct for journalists engaged in gathering, transmitting, disseminating and commenting on news and information and in describing events.

1. Respect for truth and for the right of the public to truth is the first duty of the journalist.
2. In pursuance of this duty he will defend the twin principles : freedom in the honest collection and publication of news ; and the right of fair comment and criticism.
3. The journalist reports only in accordance with the facts of which he knows the origin. He will not suppress essential information or falsify documents.
4. He will use only fair methods to obtain news, photographs and documents.
5. Any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate he will do his utmost to rectify.
6. He will observe professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence.
7. He will regard as grave professional offences the following : plagiarism, calumny, slander, libel and unfounded accusations, the acceptance of a bribe in any form in consideration of either publication or suppression.

8. Every journalist worthy of that name deems it his duty faithfully to observe the principles stated above. Within the general law of each country the journalist recognises, in professional matters, the jurisdiction of his colleagues only ; he excludes every kind of interference by governments or others.

### 10. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

#### Declaration of Rights and Obligations of Journalists (This text was approved at a meeting of representatives of the Journalists' Unions of the six countries of the European Community in *Munich* (Germany), November 23/24, 1971)

##### *Preamble*

The right to information, to freedom of expression and criticism is one of the fundamental rights of man.

All rights and duties of a journalist originate from this right of the public to be informed on events and opinions.

The journalists' responsibility towards the public excels any other responsibility, particularly towards employers and public authorities.

The mission of information necessarily includes restrictions which journalists spontaneously impose on themselves. This is the object of the declaration of duties formulated below.

A journalist, however, can respect these duties while exercising his profession only if conditions of independence and professional dignity effectively exist. This is the object of the following declaration of rights.

##### *Declaration of duties*

The essential obligations of a journalist engaged in gathering, editing and commenting news are :

1. — To respect truth whatever be the consequence to himself, because of the right of the public to know the truth ;
2. — To defend freedom of information, comment and criticism ;
3. — To report only on facts of which he knows the origin ; not to suppress essential information nor alter texts and documents ;
4. — Not to use unfair methods to obtain news, photographs or documents ;
5. — To restrict himself to the respect of privacy ;
6. — To rectify any published information which is found to be inaccurate ;
7. — To observe professional secrecy and not to divulge the source of information obtained in confidence ;
8. — To regard as grave professional offences the following : plagiarism, calumny, slander, libel and unfounded accusations, the acceptance of a bribe in any form in consideration of either publication or suppression.

ded accusations, the acceptance of bribe in any form in consideration of either publication or suppression of news ;

9. — Never to confuse the profession of a journalist with that of advertisements salesman or a propagandist and to refuse any direct or indirect orders from advertisers.

10. — To resist every pressure and to accept editorial orders only from the responsible persons of the editorial staff.

Every journalist worthy of that name deems it his duty faithfully to observe the principles stated above. Within the general law of each country, the journalist recognises, in professional matters, the jurisdiction of his colleagues only ; he excludes every kind of interference by governments or others.

#### *Declaration of rights*

1. — Journalists claim free access to all information sources, and the right to freely enquire on all events conditioning public life. Therefore, secret of public or private affairs may be opposed only to journalists in exceptional cases and for clearly expressed motives ;

2. — The journalist has the right to refuse subordination to anything contrary to the general policy of the information organ to which he collaborates such as it has been laid down by writing and incorporated in his contract of employment, as well as any subordination not clearly implicated by this general policy ;

3. — A journalist cannot be compelled to perform a professional act or to express an opinion contrary to his convictions or his conscience ;

4. — The editorial staff has obligatorily to be informed on all important decisions which may influence the life of the enterprise. It should at least be consulted before a definitive decision on all matters related to the composition of the editorial staff e.g. recruitment, dismissals, mutations and promotion of journalists is taken.

5. — Taking in account his functions and responsibilities, the journalist is entitled not only to the advantages resulting from collective agreements but also to an individual contract of employment, ensuring the material and moral security of his work as well as a wage system corresponding to his social condition and guaranteeing his economic independence.

#### **11. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS**

(Document presented by IOJ to the Collective Consultations on Codes of Ethics for the Mass Media organized by Unesco, Paris, 12-13 Nov. 1973)

1. The journalist should try to verify the veracity of the news that he publishes or comments on ; if this verification is impossible, he should publish it with reserva-

tions ; he should abstain from distorting or tendentiously truncating it ; he should rectify it, if it subsequently proves to be erroneous.

2. The journalist should assume the responsibility for what he publishes. He should respect professional secrecy and should be satisfied with publishing news communicated to him under these conditions. He should not reveal the source of his information, except to his responsible superior, if the latter also considers himself bound by professional secrecy ; he should be released from this secrecy only if his source of information gives him his authorization, or if it is proved that this source of information has clearly misguided him for reasons of economic, political or personal gain. If facts seriously affecting the life of the community or related to common-law crime are concerned, then respect for professional secrecy is incumbent on the personal conscience of the journalist.

3. The journalist should avoid slander, defamation and insults ; both with respect to individuals and to ethnic, religious and national groups.

Unless he is expressly authorized by the persons concerned, he should respect the private lives of individuals provided that this has no implications of general interest.

4. The journalist should safeguard the dignity of the profession. He should abstain from resorting to fraudulent means of gathering his news. He should not solicit or accept any remuneration or any personal advantage from third parties for publishing, or not publishing, or distorting information. He should exclude from his work all commercial publicity.

5. The journalist should try, in his fraternal relations, to maintain an equilibrium between loyal competition and the necessary solidarity. He must not indulge in plagiarism. He should defend any colleagues who may be persecuted for their devotion to freedom and to the ethical principles of the profession. He must not permit, in recruitment or in the distribution of professional tasks, any discrimination based on race or religion.

6. The journalist is above all in the service of the public interest. In his work, he should help to strengthen the basic principles of human rights and the development of a better mutual knowledge and understanding among peoples. He should therefore avoid approving or urging recourse to violence as a means of resolving international litigation. He must be careful not to encourage racial discrimination or racial, ethnic, national or religious hatreds.

#### **12. DRAFT INTERNATIONAL CODES OF ETHICS FOR INFORMATION PERSONNEL (United Nations)**

##### *Preamble*

Freedom of information and of the Press is a fundamental human right and is the touchstone of all the freedoms consecrated in the Charter of the United Nations and

proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and it is essential to the promotion and to the preservation of peace.

That freedom will be the better safeguarded when the personnel of the Press and of all other media of information constantly and voluntarily strive to maintain the highest sense of responsibility, being deeply imbued with the moral obligation to be truthful and to search for the truth in reporting, in explaining and in interpreting facts.

This International Code of Ethics is therefore proclaimed as a standard of professional conduct for all engaged in gathering, transmitting, disseminating and commenting on news and information and in describing contemporary events by the written word, by word of mouth or by any other means of expression.

#### *Article I*

The personnel of the Press and of all other media of information should do all in their power to ensure that the information the public receives is factually accurate. They should check all items of information to the best of their ability. No fact should be wilfully distorted and no essential fact should be deliberately suppressed.

#### *Article II*

A high standard of professional conduct requires devotion to the public interest. The seeking of personal advantage and the promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare, for whatever reason, is not compatible with such professional conduct.

Wilful calumny, slander, libel and unfounded accusations are serious professional offences; so also is plagiarism.

Good faith with the public is the foundation of good journalism. Any published information which is found to be harmfully inaccurate should be spontaneously and immediately rectified. Rumour and unconfirmed news should be identified and treated as such.

#### *Article III*

Only such tasks as are compatible with the integrity and dignity of the profession should be assigned or accepted by personnel of the Press and other media of information, as also by those participating in the economic and commercial activities of information enterprises.

Those who make public any information or comment should assume full responsibility for what is published unless such responsibility is explicitly disclaimed at the time.

The reputation of individuals should be respected and information and comment on their private lives likely to harm their reputation should not be published unless it serves the public interest, as distinguished from public curiosity. If charges against reputation or moral character are made, opportunity should be given for reply.

Discretion should be observed concerning sources of information. Professional secrecy should be observed in matters revealed in confidence; and this privilege may always be invoked to the furthest limits of law.

#### *Article IV*

It is the duty of those who describe and comment upon events relating to a foreign country to acquire the necessary knowledge of such a country which will enable them to report and comment accurately and fairly thereon.

#### *Article V*

This Code is based on the principle that the responsibility for ensuring the faithful observance of professional ethics rests upon those who are engaged in the profession, and not upon any government. Nothing herein may therefore be interpreted as implying any justification for intervention by a government in any manner whatsoever to enforce observance of the moral obligations set forth in this Code.

(1952)

#### *Concepts designed particularly for journalists*

1. *Moral responsibility for what is written.* In accepting full moral responsibility for the information he provides, the journalists should attempt to verify the accuracy of the information he uses. If he cannot verify it, this should be noted in his story.

2. *Access to sources.* In the exercise of his functions, a journalist should have full access to the sources of information, particularly those affecting public affairs.

(During the collective consultations, the suggestion was made that access to sources of information, particularly for foreign correspondents, might be facilitated by the adoption of an international journalists' card. On a further point, participants also linked the concept of access to the question of professional secrecy (see below). Another point made was that free access also carried with it the idea that the public should be enabled to obtain the information it needs; i.e. by a multiplicity of viewpoints and the avoidance, in so far as possible, of monolithic reporting).

3. *Professional secrecy.* The right of journalists to preserve the secrecy of their sources of information is one of the basic principles of the profession. Under certain circumstances, it is understood that the journalist may be obliged to break this rule of secrecy in the interests of society. For example, if a journalist has prior knowledge of a crime, his responsibility as a citizen outweighs that as a journalist.

(In this connexion, the two major non-governmental organizations of journalists have stated their position. The International Federation of Journalists has approved a declaration stating that newsmen should keep profes-

sional secrecy regarding sources of information obtained in confidence. The International Organization of Journalists has stated that the journalist respects professional secrecy and keeps private information communicated to him under this condition. He also does not reveal the sources of his information except to his responsible superior if he considers the latter is also bound by the principle of secrecy).

4. *Calumny and slander.* While in most cases calumny and slander are subject to legal bars, the avoidance of such acts is also a major responsibility which has been included in many existing codes.

5. *Plagiarism.* Once again, there are laws concerning plagiarism but the codes which include an injunction against this practice are particularly concerned with professional solidarity and the responsibility of a journalist to avoid actions which adversely affect a colleague.

(In this connexion, the signing of an article prepared by a fellow journalist was singled out).

6. *Publicity or propaganda.* The journalist should not accept payment in money or services for any story except from the media organization for which he works. Since his first loyalty should be to this organization, he should also avoid including commercial publicity in any story.

#### *Concepts directed particularly to management*

1. *Freedom of information.* The right to information implies as wide as possible a gamut of points of view on a particular event. In the case of the written press, where there are fewer monopolies than there are in many cases in the field of radio and television, freedom of information is best served by the existence of competing newspapers. In this connexion, therefore, the natural competition among newspapers should not be employed to diminish their number. The existence of the printed press along with the other electronic news media can also help to provide that diversity of news which is recognizably desirable. Again, therefore, it is to their mutual interest that the competing media function simultaneously.

2. *Service to the public.* In view of the range and scope of the mass media, they occupy an important position in serving the public. As a result, they should accept moral as well as legal responsibility for the way they handle news. This implies not only avoidance of distortion or manipulation of the news but also the positive effort to promote better understanding within a community and on the international level.

3. *Correction of errors.* Libel and slander laws ensure to a certain extent the correction of errors in the written or oral press. The standards of good journalism require that to the extent feasible mass media institutions should not await legal action but endeavour to diffuse corrections to honest errors that may have been committed under the pressure of deadlines or because of erroneous information. A number of countries have attempted to

regulate the right to correction by law and a United Nations convention on this subject has entered into operation.

(The consultations heard that, particularly for television broadcasters, the correction of erroneous reports imposes a heavy commitment upon the limited time available for news. It is therefore necessary to recognize that the correction process among broadcasters may be restricted to major errors rather than minor ones, such as a mistake in a name or address).

4. *Right to reply.* As in the preceding principle, the right to reply is as much a moral commitment as a legal one. The written press in many countries has long adopted the principle that this is an inherent right of individuals. For radio and television, the right to reply, however, is again conditioned by the amount of time available for news and also the importance of the event reported.

### **13. COLLECTIVE CONSULTATIONS ON CODES OF ETHICS FOR THE MASS MEDIA**

Unesco House, Paris, 12-13 November 1973

On 12 and 13 November 1973, representatives of international non-governmental organizations of press, radio and television joined the Unesco Secretariat in consultations at Headquarters on codes of ethics adopted by mass media organizations in different parts of the world.

The collective consultations discussed three techniques for the preparation of guiding principles in the field of ethics. The first was the drafting of a single code that might be of use to professional organizations which did not as yet possess one. The second would be to draft a code containing several versions of certain articles designed to meet the varying needs of media organizations in different countries and differing social and economic systems. The third possibility would be simply to present a kind of «shopping list» of concepts which might be adopted in whole or in part by individual organizations of press, film, radio, television and advertising.

#### *Ethical principles for journalists*

An examination of the precepts embodied in existing codes of ethics indicates that the broad concepts involved apply to various aspects of the communication process. Some cover the profession as a whole ; but others concern particularly working journalists, while still another set of ideas refers essentially to management. This latter category would include specifically radio and television as well as the press.

#### *Concepts for the profession as a whole*

1. *Truthfulness* in reporting. This basic principle of accuracy in reporting carries with it, as an essential concomitant, the *integrity* of those at the journalistic and management levels.

2. *Fairness of treatment.* This comprises the obligation to provide a balanced account of a particular news event but also engages the responsibility of journalists and operators to avoid incomplete or deliberately slanted versions, whether they involve an automobile accident or the description of policy decisions in a foreign country. It thus includes a number of important but subordinate concepts such as *relevance* and *factuality*.

While a number of codes also call for *objectivity*, representatives at the November consultations felt that this concept was impossible to attain and, indeed, in many countries, not desirable. They referred particularly to the widespread practices of a «*presse engagée*»).

3. *Reporting of violence and crimes.* Avoidance of undue sensationalism is generally considered to be a moral principle to be observed by the working press and its management.

(Generally the representatives at the November consultations were agreed that moderation was the hallmark of reporting not only concerning crimes and violence but also in matters involving sex).

4. *Respect for privacy.* This concept, in certain cases, overlaps with the preceding principle in that it implies also the avoidance of sensationalism.

(The consultations elicited the opinion that the right to privacy was, however, also conditioned by the profession of the person involved. It was noted, for example, that a national politician or a movie star had by virtue of their position yielded the right to as much protection of privacy as was accorded to a less prominent individual. The participants also called attention to voluntary restrictions on reporting such as those avoiding mention of the past criminal background of a person in the news).

5. *Confraternity.* The information media should strive to maintain a balance between fair competition and the need for solidarity within the profession. No discrimination because of race, religion or nationality should be accepted.

(The consultations drew particular attention to the problem faced in this regard by correspondents operating in countries other than their own. It was felt that the mass media had a particular responsibility to aid foreign correspondents, action which could also improve the quality of their dispatches by ensuring fuller background knowledge).

6. *Professional training.* The competence of journalists in all the mass media can evidently be improved by sound professional training, including the inculcation of ethical standards at an early stage in their career.

(The consultations were informed that even in countries with pluralistic and privately-owned television organizations, the exercise of the right to reply is not allowed to stifle news reporting by multiple demands for «equal time», particularly in cases involving election campaigns).

Finally, there are a number of principles, found in certain ethical codes in the mass media, which the non-governmental organizations considered to be of limited application because they corresponded only to particular national situations. For the record, these included : responsibility for national security, penalty procedures for violations of codes, copyright, rules on photographs, incitement to violence, and reporting of official procedures.

**Participants :** Theo BOGAERTS, Secretary-General, International Federation of Journalists ; Marcel CAZE, European Broadcasting Union ; Ernest MEYER, Director, International Press Institute ; Jean-Maurice HERMANN, President, International Organization of Journalists , Aurelian NESTOR, International Organization of Journalists ; Edward PLOMAN, Executive Director, International Broadcast Institute ; Michel de SAINT-PIERRE, Director International Federation of Newspapers Editors ; Unesco Secretariat ; Gunnar NAESSELUND, Edward WEGMAN, Hifzi TOPUZ, Ahmed KETTANI.

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